# UP THE RHINE AND OVER THE ALPS

By S. K. HOCKING,
AUTHOR OF
"HER BENNY," ETC.

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# UP THE RHINE

AND

# OVER THE ALPS.

BY

SILAS K. HOCKING, F.R.H.S.,

AUTHOR OF "HER BENNY," "HIS FATHER," "ALEC GREEN," "SEA WAIF," "IVY," ETC., ETC.

**FOURTH EDITION.**

*WITH ILLUSTRATIONS.*

LONDON:
ANDREW CROMBIE, 119, SALISBURY SQUARE,
FLEET STREET, E.C.

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# PREFACE.

SEVERAL of the following chapters have already appeared in the pages of a monthly magazine. Whether or not I have done wisely in adding the other chapters, and issuing them in their present form, others must judge. That I have been somewhat influenced by the repeated requests of many who had read the earlier pages I do not deny. But the chief reason has been my own desire to have in an attractive and permanent form the record of one of the pleasantest holidays I have ever had.

Since these notes were written, I have visited other parts of the world, but my impressions of Switzerland remain unchanged. No other place has so captivated my imagination, or filled me with such wonder and delight. And if this little book should induce any weary, hard-working Englishman to take a trip "Up

the Rhine and over the Alps," I shall feel that my labour has not been altogether wasted.

While this is in no sense a guide-book, the route here indicated may prove convenient to any who are visiting Switzerland for the first time. I make no claim to originality or literary merit. When I have been able conveniently to quote from other writers, I have done so, and have indicated the same in inverted commas. And now I leave my "Notes of a Summer Holiday" in the hands of a generous public, from whom hitherto I have received nothing but kindness.

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# UP THE RHINE AND OVER THE ALPS.

## CHAPTER I.

### FROM QUEENBOROUGH TO ANTWERP.

It was dark and chilly when we—that is, J—— and I with our respective wives—stepped on board one of the splendid steamers that ply between Queenborough and Flushing, so that the light and warmth of the large saloon were most grateful, while on the tables a tempting supper was spread of most substantial fare. I am not a believer in heavy suppers, however, so I manfully resisted the temptation, and proceeded at once to my berth, to ascertain what accommodation I was likely to have for the night. Nothing could be better. An outside berth, clean and roomy.

"This is just splendid," said J——. "With such splendid accommodation we shall be sorry we are not going to America."

"That will depend," I remarked.

"Depend on what?"

I thought of several things, but suggested "weather."

"Ah! just so. But now let's have a stroll on deck, before turning in for the night."

The twinkling lights of Queenborough were already far behind us, and before us the trackless sea, looking dark and solemn enough under a starless sky. There was just breeze enough to crest the waves with white, but not enough to disturb the easy, regular roll of our vessel.

For awhile we stood leaning over the bulwarks, watching the phosphorescent light playing in the foamy wake of one of the paddle-wheels. It was a beautiful sight. Every beat of the paddle flung to the surface of the water hundreds of little rings of light, that spun around each other in the most bewildering fashion, and then danced away in the wake of the vessel till lost to sight.

"Do you remember the last time we crossed the German Ocean?" J—— remarked at length.

"Rather."

"If we had had a boat like this, it would have been all right."

Just so. But therein lay all the difference. We were returning from Rotterdam then. Our boat was small and old, and loaded to her utmost carrying

capacity, and crowded as well with passengers, some of whom had waited a day longer, in the hope of getting better weather. I pitied them from my heart, for the previous night was calm compared to this. We managed to keep on deck till we crossed the bar at the mouth of the river, then our hearts sank—at least mine did (though a few hours later it seemed to rise considerably higher than was comfortable). I think I never saw a wilder sky or a wilder sea. I wondered the captain did not turn back. It seemed folly to put out to sea on such a night, and in such a boat. But I suppose he hoped, as we all did, that the wind would abate. But it didn't. It grew wilder all the while. From ten o'clock till four next morning we were penned below. Great seas swept the boat from stem to stern, and made her creak and shiver as though she must inevitably go to pieces. How anxiously we listened to the regular beat-beat of the engine! If that should fail, it would be all up with us.

About midnight the life-belts were got out, in case of emergency. We most of us looked pale enough before, but that made us look worse. Nobody spoke, however. Now and then a moan was heard, or a snatch of prayer, that was all. And still the storm raved, and still the billows beat upon us and swept the decks.

Sometimes a heavier sea than usual would strike her motionless, and then our hearts would stop.

"God help us, she's gone!" somebody would whisper. Then she would begin to shiver, and our hearts would beat again.

It was a long night, and a solemn one, but it came to an end at last, and with the dawn the wind abated. We were timed to make the passage in eight hours. It took us eighteen. But nobody grumbled. We were thankful to get into port at all.

I thought of all this as I stood watching the dancing circles of light behind the paddle-wheel, and was not a little grateful for a still night and a quiet sea. It was midnight when I "turned in," and then for another hour I courted sleep in vain. The roll of the vessel, the beat of the engines, and the tramp of the watchers on deck, are not at all conducive to speedy repose. But I dropped off at length; but not for long, however. With the first glimmer of dawn I was wide awake again, and, pulling open my window, I looked out. A new day was rising out of the sea. Pale bars of light shot up into the sky, trembled for a moment, faded, and went out. Then others followed of deeper hue, fluttered for a while, and vanished. Then a yellow bar of light appeared on the fringe of the sea, that grew at last blood-red. Then other bars appeared,

of almost every hue, red, pink, purple, yellow, fading off into the softest and palest of green. And behind these great bars, spokes of yellow light shot up and out, and kissed the waves, and turned the sea to blood. It was a beautiful picture, like all God's pictures are; rich in colour almost to lavishness. A few moments later and Day had hung her bright banners all over the sky, and on the sea a golden highway stretched till lost in the burning sun.

Soon after the low Dutch coast appeared in sight, and by half-past six we had rounded the little promontory at the mouth of the Scheldt, and dropped anchor in Flushing harbour. Then came the hurry and bustle of landing, the examination of luggage by the Customs' officers,—always an annoying process,—and then to the railway buffet for breakfast.

Horrors! A chance acquaintance on board had told us not to get breakfast on board by any means. "Such a splendid buffet at the station! Such variety of refreshments, such obliging waiters, such moderate charges!" I did not see that man after breakfast, which, perhaps, was well for both of us.

In the saloon of our vessel an appetising breakfast was spread, of broiled ham, poached eggs, cold meats, toast and butter, and steaming hot tea and coffee. And yet I turned my back on it all,—though my teeth

were watering all the while,—and found in lieu thereof ham sandwiches, I dare not say how old; eggs perhaps a trifle older; tea that might have been brewing a month; coffee a shade better—and charges to match!

My experiences of Holland have not been happy. Three years before, a vendor of fruit at a railway station somewhere in the neighbourhood of Utrecht, taking advantage of my limited acquaintance with Dutch money, fleeced me to the tune of fifteenpence; and later in the same day a cabman attempted a similar performance. And now, if I was not cheated, I was most palpably "sold."

Holland is not a striking country, unless, like Don Quixote, you should happen to be riding in the neighbourhood of the windmills, of which there is a wonderful display; not tall, substantial structures like those to be seen in the Fens of Lincolnshire, but low, "squat" concerns of the most primitive construction. Across the fertile flats long lines of poplars and pollard-willows mark the highways that intersect the land, and right and left low white houses with red-tiled roofs give some little variety to the scene. The rich soil bore splendid crops, as was everywhere evidenced, and not an inch of land seemed to be wasted. But travelling through Holland at the rate of twenty miles an hour (express) grows monotonous in time.

We were soon conscious that we were strangers in a strange land. I had heard of "double Dutch" from my earliest recollection, but to ordinary Englishmen "single Dutch" is quite sufficient. It may be a very expressive language,—I do not know,—but to untutored ears like mine it certainly was not musical.

At Roosendal, where we had to change trains and wait an unconscionably long time for another, a porter in blue blouse and German cap afforded us great amusement. He had a voice of the consistency of a trombone with a German behind it blowing his best, and every few minutes he put his head in at the door of the waiting-room and gave us a salute. This seemed quite unnecessary trouble, as, without exception, I should say the passengers were English and American, and not one of them seemed to have the remotest idea what all the clatter meant. But how should he know that we were ignorant foreigners not knowing the language of the country through which we were passing? So with Spartan fidelity he pelted us at regular intervals with such a volley of articles, nouns, adjectives, pronouns, verbs, adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions, and interjections (I presume this to be the case) as is not often one's lot to experience. It became positively ludicrous in time, and the sound of his footstep on the gravel, or the

sight of his blue blouse, was the signal for a roar.

We were not sorry to get away from Roosendal. One feels disappointed, and not a little disposed to be angry, on visiting Holland for the first time, to find that his ideal Dutchman, whose portly figure has been made familiar in picture and story-book, is purely a creature of the imagination. Mynheer Van Dunck, big, solid, and slow, smoking his huge pipe in stolid indifference of all that is passing around him, or waddling lazily along the level streets, if he ever existed, exists no longer. At least, it has never been my privilege to meet with him. The Dutchman one meets to-day is a little man, spare and sallow, the reverse of phlegmatic, and as unpicturesque as his country. Yet he has evidently a keen eye to business, and knows as well as anybody on which side his bread is buttered.

He is thankful, too, that he is a Dutchman, and who can wonder at it? Where will you find a more enterprising race of people? The country itself is a continual reminder of his indomitable perseverance and energy. The handsome and well-built towns; the bewildering network of dykes and canals; the rich pasturages lying below the sea-level, and kept dry by continual pumping,—all bespeak his resistless

energy; and if Mynheer is proud of his country and his race, we certainly are not disposed to blame him.

Some people tell us that the Dutch are as religious as they are enterprising. I hope it may be so, though I am rather dubious about it. They are chiefly Protestants, of a strictly Calvinistic type, though of late years they have grown very much more tolerant of the beliefs of others.

But whether godly or no, they are certainly cleanly. Perhaps their cleanliness is the result of their godliness. It is said of Sammy Hick that, conducting family worship at a farmhouse on one occasion, he noticed that the servant-girl was very untidy in appearance, to use a mild term. So after a general supplication Sammy descended to particulars, and coming to the servant-girl, he said, "Lord, bless Mary, convert her soul, and then she'll wash herself."

Unlike Mary, the Dutch are particularly fond of water, and never seem so happy as when up to the eyes in soap-suds. Many families prefer to live on the water altogether. Instead of building a house, they build a barge, and float their lives away on the canals. These floating homes, with their white, clean decks, and little gardens of potted plants, are wonderfully picturesque, and the water gipsies that crowd them seem happy as the days are long.

All over the country the same love of cleanliness is apparent. The little cottages peeping out among the trees are kept as white as chalk, and form an agreeable contrast to what we have left behind us.

The route from Roosendal to Antwerp is by no means interesting. So I rolled myself up in a corner of the carriage and fell asleep. This was not a difficult task, for the carriages on the Dutch State Railway are well-cushioned and comfortable. And as the ground is perfectly flat, and the line free from sharp curves and steep gradients, while the engine-driver is never in any hurry to reach his destination, you are never jostled very much, and so find it easier to fall asleep sometimes than to keep awake.

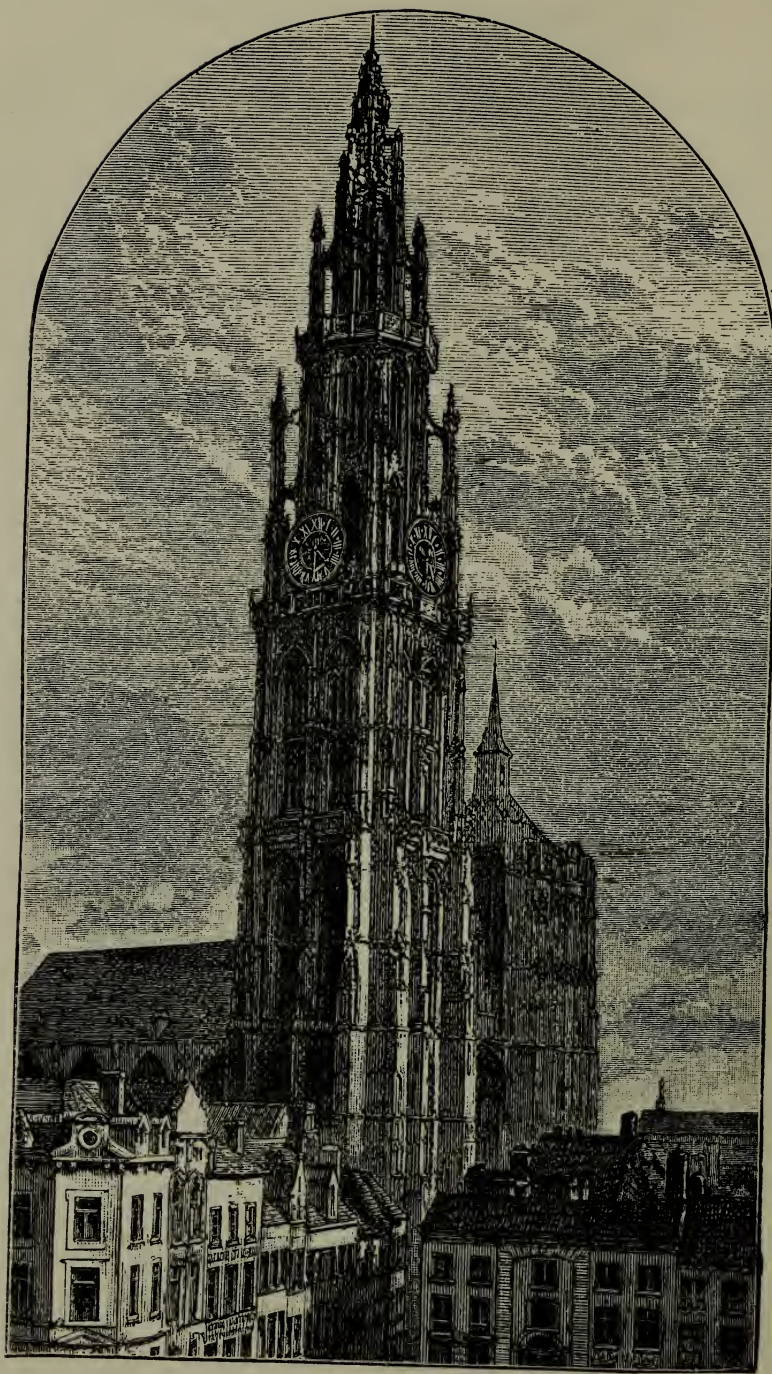
To English eyes the railways seem carelessly made and badly kept. The sleepers are of all shapes and sizes,—straight ones being the exception,—while the rails are kept in their places by large-headed brads driven into the sleepers.

I noticed, however, that the locomotives were, with scarcely an exception, of English manufacture. I was rather surprised at this, after all I had heard about the Belgians driving the English out of the market.

My slumbers were brought to a close by a voice close to my ear saying, "There's the spire at last." I was bolt upright in a moment, and lo! in the distance

was the far-famed spire of Antwerp Cathedral rising sharp and clear above the quaint old city.

The next moment the door opens, and the guard enters. "*Votre billet, Monsieur, s'il vous plaît,*" he says, very politely. And we comply without a word. A few moments later we are puffing slowly into the station—and so ends the first stage of our journey.



ANTWERP CATHEDRAL.

## CHAPTER II.

### ANTWERP AND BRUSSELS.

ANTWERP looks best when approached by the river—at least such was my reflection when approaching it by rail; but once within the quaint old city, both river and rail are forgotten, and you give yourself up to thorough-going enjoyment of one of the pleasantest old places in Europe.

I am not particularly fond of cities as a general rule, and certainly when I take a holiday I prefer to get away among the hills or by the sounding sea. But to the rule of cities Antwerp is a notable exception. "It is a place to love and admire," somebody has said, and in that sentiment I heartily concur. Part of its charm doubtless lies in its "old-worldness," to coin a word: you feel as if you had been suddenly transported back to the seventeenth century. A dozen things at every turn remind you of a bygone age. The streets are narrow, marvellously crooked, and running at all kinds of angles. The houses are old-fashioned, sharp-gabled,

and so tall that the two sides of the street seem to come together as they near the sky. At nearly every corner there is a niche in the wall containing a blue Virgin with a yellow baby in her arms (intended to represent the infant Saviour, we suppose), and surmounted by a gilded canopy of quaint design. In front of the windows in many of the streets little mirrors are so arranged that the fair ladies within can see all that is passing in the streets below without themselves being seen; while the narrow pavements are thronged by people in quaint costumes, the ancient Flemish head-gear of the peasant women being especially conspicuous.

There is no hurry as in our English streets, and very little noise. In front of the *cafés* the men sit drinking and smoking at all hours of the day, and yet I saw no drunkenness; while all day long the milk-dealers parade the streets with little carts drawn by dogs, and appear to do a thriving trade.

The most conspicuous object, however, in Antwerp, and the most beautiful, is the cathedral, with its wonderfully-wrought spire rising to a height of 404 feet. So delicate and fine is the sculptured tracery of the various portions of this spire, that Charles V. said it deserved to be kept in a glass case, while Napoleon compared it to Mechlin lace.

My first feeling, as I stood at the west front and looked up at it, was one of wonder how anything so marvellously delicate in its open-work could ever have been reared to such a height, and how when reared it has been able to resist the storms of six hundred winters. Yet there it stands to-day as proud and lovely as of old, despite the crowd of little shops and mean dwellings that have clustered round its base. Often it has been in danger in the wars and sieges from which Antwerp has suffered so severely. Yet the bitterest foe has spared it. It was too beautiful to be destroyed.

Every seven minutes its famous carillon of sixty bells swings out over the quaint old city the sweetest bell-music on earth. I never understood what "silvery chimes so sweetly stealing" meant until I heard the Antwerp bells. Wherever I might be in the streets, I always stopped to listen when the chimes began, and could almost fancy that far up in the sky a company of children were singing, with voices ever changing, yet always harmonious and true. Sometimes I tried to follow a peculiar tone as it threaded its way through the varying chords till lost in the wondrous harmony. If ever I find myself in Belgium again, I shall go to Antwerp if only for the sake of hearing the bells.

The interior of the cathedral presents a bewildering

array of curious and interesting objects. At first you are impressed with its magnitude. It is seven-aisled, and is 390 ft. long by 250 ft. wide; but when you have taken in the general effects, you can then contentedly follow the guide and examine it in detail. Of course Rubens' world-famous masterpiece, "The Descent from the Cross," first claims your attention, and after that the "Elevation of the Cross"—marvellous pictures in their way, especially the former; but I cannot say that I am a great admirer of Rubens. His women are "too Dutch,"—to coin a phrase,—his children too red and too fat, while the portraits of his wives appear so often on his canvas that one gets tired of them after a while. The celebrated picture of Van Brée, "The Death of Rubens," is to my mind finer than anything Rubens ever painted.

I have spent many hours at different times wandering through this famous old cathedral, and each time I have found some fresh object of interest and admiration, while objects I had previously admired had lost none of their charm. Indeed, some objects gain in interest with each successive visit. Especially is this true of the celebrated "Head of the Saviour," painted on marble by Leonardo da Vinci. Of all faces pictured by human art this is certainly the most beautiful I have ever seen.

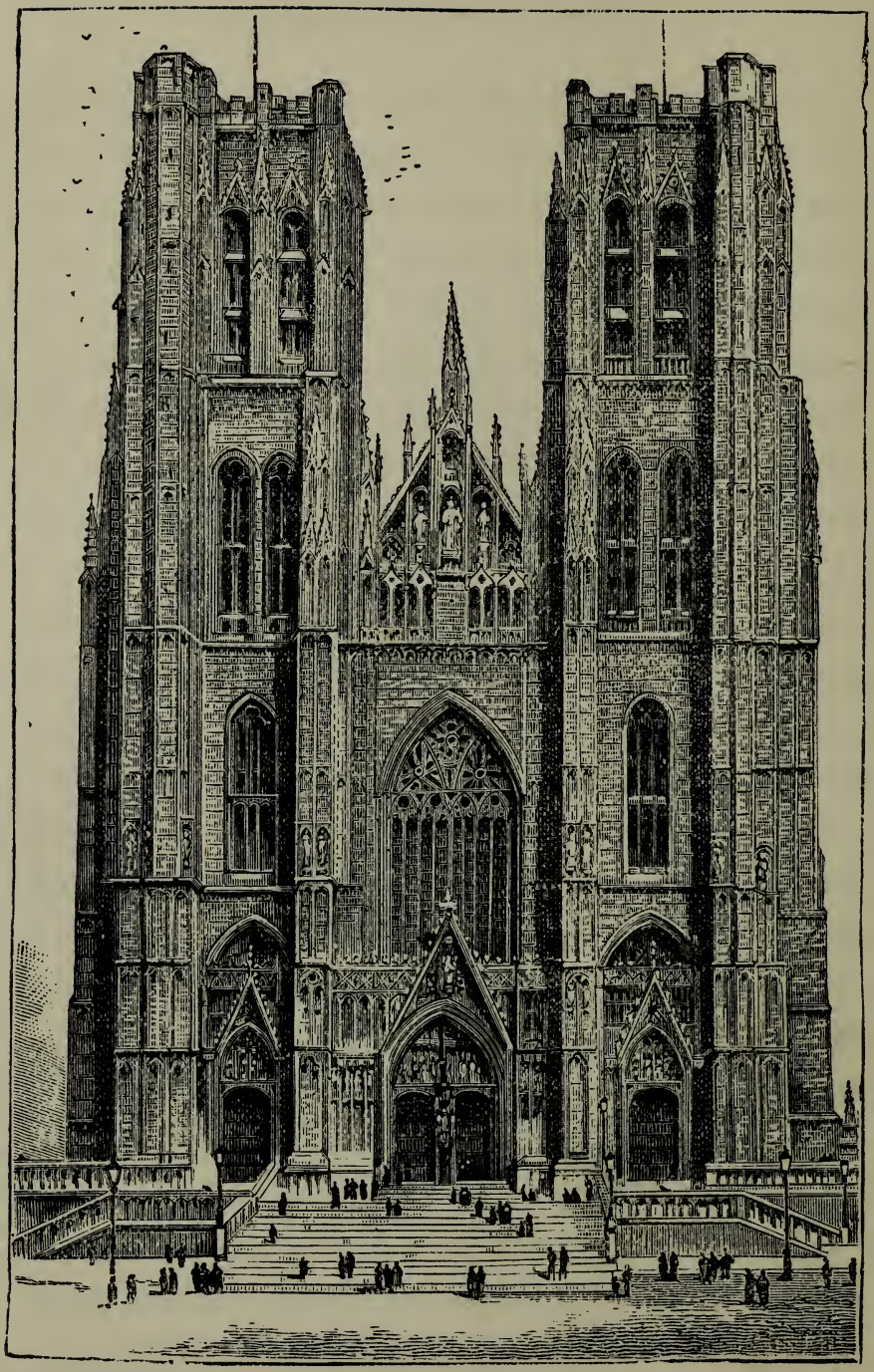
Behind the choir, which contains an almost theatrical amount of splendour, are eight chapels, fitted up with much taste, and containing paintings, gems, candlesticks, embroidery, gold and silver plate, and altar-pieces of fabulous value.

And what is true of the cathedral is true of many of the churches in a somewhat lesser degree. Indeed, it has been said that Rome itself can scarcely boast of more costly pictures or art treasures than is possessed by Antwerp.

The city is full of Rubens. Here he spent the greater part of his life, living in splendour among his people, sustaining the character, not only of an illustrious painter, but of an important political personage. Here he painted the greater portion of his fifteen hundred pictures. Here he died, and in the Church of St. Jacques I was shown his tomb. Statues of Rubens are numerous, and in the museum of pictures I noticed they had carried his glorification so far as to preserve his arm-chair in a glass case.

But were I to attempt to describe in detail half the objects of interest Antwerp contains, I should fill a volume, and so I may as well stop first as last.

From Antwerp to Brussels is only twenty-seven miles. The bells were swinging out their cheery music from their lofty seat of embroidered stone as I



CHURCH OF ST. GUDULE, BRUSSELS.

left my hotel. I paused for a moment to listen to the sweet liquid strains that were floating down through the stagnant air like music from a happier sphere; then reluctantly entered the open cab, and was driven quickly away.

In another hour I was in fair Brussels, with evidences on every hand of ease, wealth, and luxury. Everybody calls Brussels the miniature Paris, and as far as it goes —and it goes a considerable way—it is quite true. The native of the Belgian capital despises his native tongue in his ceaseless endeavour to acquire a Parisian accent pure and undefiled. He is French in everything but his nationality. His lively city on the Senne has been modelled after the lively city on the Seine.

"Paris has its Palace of the Tuileries with its fronting garden, Brussels its Palace du Roi with its fronting park. Paris has its Bois de Boulogne, Brussels its Bois de la Cambre. Paris has its Notre Dame, Brussels its St. Gudule. Paris has its columns, its fountains, its leafy, breezy boulevards, its countless *cafés*, its attractive shops with repelling prices, its shocking horses, and artful cabmen. And all these Brussels reproduces with startling fidelity."

But I am not going to linger at Brussels, for I have not an overmastering passion for cities. I certainly admired the Grande Place, surrounded with its top-

pling, zigzag, ten-storied buildings, and set off on one side by the Hotel de Ville, with its wonderfully-wrought spire rising three hundred and seventy feet into the air. The Palais de Justice, covering its eight acres of ground, is also a magnificent building, and was nearing completion when I was there. One pleasant evening I spent in the park, sipping coffee under the tall trees, and enjoying the sweet music discoursed by one of the most famous bands in the country.

But what interested me most in the Belgian capital were the pictures of the celebrated Wiertz. They are preserved in what is known as the Wiertz Musée, in the outskirts of the city. Wiertz himself never sold a picture except when driven by want to do so: his theory being that no man could be a great artist that painted for money. When he died—and it is said he died a raving maniac—he left his collection of pictures as a legacy to the nation. They are wonderful examples of colour, painfully realistic many of them, and some of them of mammoth size. I shall not attempt to describe them, for description is simply impossible.

From Brussels I went on to Waterloo. But of that in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER III.

### WATERLOO.

THERE are two ways from Brussels to Waterloo. You can hire a carriage and pair and drive there direct. That is considered the proper thing, and most of the swells, I believe, do it. Or you can do the thing much more cheaply and expeditiously—that is, you can go by train.

Time is money on the Continent as well as in England; and *money* is money also. So I sacrificed style for the sake of cheapness and expedition, and went by train.

The Field of Waterloo is some distance beyond the village bearing that name, and as the village contains nothing of interest save the church, and the tomb erected over the Marquis of Anglesea's leg, the tourist hurries forward with all possible haste. Yet if he have read Bell's "Wayside Pictures," he will turn aside for a few moments to this little garden near the church, and examine this famous burying-ground.

Bell has told the story so well, that I cannot do better than give it in his own words:—

"It was a thought worthy of Cervantes to build a tomb to the glory of the Marquis of Anglesea's leg. In a cottage close to the church the marquis's leg was cut off by Surgeon O'Brien (let the operator go down to posterity together with the hero who was operated upon); and the said leg, being no common leg, was awarded the rites of Christian burial, and with due ceremony deposited in the dusty little garden, where a monument, bearing a pious inscription, was erected over its grave. The boot which once belonged to this leg is still kept on show here, and the coarse Titanesque woman who exhibits the place does not scruple to relate extravagant legends of both leg and boot for the delectation of the *gobemouche* English who flock here in crowds to visit them. Two advertisements over the tomb announce the astounding facts that the cottage was visited in 1821 by George IV. of England, and afterwards by the King and Princesses of Prussia, and the Titanesque show-woman gravely assures you that the Marquis of Anglesea himself, with one foot in the grave, has ever since the Battle of Waterloo made an annual pilgrimage to gaze upon the tomb of his leg. Alas! for glory that perisheth thus in vanity! While Achilles in the Park makes Wellington a pigmy,

the Marquis of Anglesea's toe points the moral of Waterloo."

Curious thoughts about the resurrection flitted through my brain as I pressed forward over ground which the British heroes trod on their way to that fearful conflict, and I could but hope that the hero whose carcase rests so far away from one of its supporters might suffer no inconvenience when the trump should summon him to march again.

The first object that arrested my attention, long before I reached the "Field," was the celebrated *Mont du Lion*. This is a large mound or pyramid of earth reared upon the spot where the victory was won. It is 200 feet high, and about 1,700 feet in circumference. Mounting 225 steps, with an occasional pause to regain my breath, I found myself on the top, in the shadow of a granite pedestal, on which stood an immense lion cast from the guns taken from the French. Not a very dignified-looking lion, I thought. Certainly it is big enough, weighing as it does 48,000 pounds. But though it does its best to look fierce, and opens its jaws to an enormous width, it hangs its tail in a craven fashion, and seems to me a very un-British kind of lion, notwithstanding its enormous bulk.

From the top of this mound a splendid view is obtained of the surrounding country. The weather

was magnificent when I was there, and the fields lay steeped in a summer haze. Lying on the grassy slope in the shadow of the lion, and lifting our hats to catch the cooling breeze that swept across the country, we listened in dreamy fashion while our guide in broken English told again the story of that famous but bloody conflict. From the sunny meadows below us came the murmur of voices, chiefly of women and children, who were busy gathering up the rustling corn and binding it into sheaves; while meek-eyed cows,—not oxen,—yoked into the most primitive-looking waggons I had ever seen, stood patiently waiting till their load was complete, or moved slowly across the stubble dragging their precious burden.

It seemed difficult to realise that that quite pastoral scene was once the theatre of such a fearful conflict; yet I had but to turn my eyes in the direction our guide pointed, and the places I had read about in my childhood stood before me.

There stands the old windmill yet, from which the approach of Blucher with the Prussians was first descried, to the great relief of Wellington and the dismay of Napoleon; and that meadow yonder is the very spot where the English stood in squares, firm and immovable, while company after company of the French dashed at them like billows on a boisterous sea; but—

WATERLOO.

"They were met as a rock meets the wave,
And dashes its fury to air;
They were met as the foe should be met by the brave,
With hearts for the conflict, but none for despair."

I intended to quote only the first two lines of the verse when I started, as they express all I wanted to say; but not liking to mutilate the verse, I have given it complete, though the last lines seem to me to breathe a sanguinary spirit that I confess to have little sympathy with. Of course, if war is inevitable, let it be short, sharp, and, if needs be, bloody, if that will the sooner end it; but when it is over, and the victory ours, it seems to me we have precious little to glory in. Alas for the human passions, the burning thirst for conquest, the wicked spirit of hate that make war possible, nay, almost inevitable! But to glory in that which but reveals how deeply rooted those passions are is little in harmony, according to my thinking, with that Gospel whose message is "Peace on earth, and good-will toward men."

But to return to our guide. He did not profess—as I am told so many of the guides do—to have been an eye-witness of the battle. Perhaps he thought it would be rather too great a tax on our credulity, seeing that the battle was fought in the year 1815, and he could not possibly have been more than forty-five years

of age. He did claim, however, to be the son of a man who had witnessed the struggle, and that he had heard his father describe the scene so often that he could not possibly forget it. I think, perhaps, that this was true. He did not seem to be of the imaginative sort, and yet his descriptions were exceedingly vivid and in perfect harmony with the facts of the case as recorded in history.

So, of course, we duly inspected the chief places of interest—La Haye Sainte; La Belle Alliance; the headquarters of Napoleon; and the grave of Shaw, the Life Guardsman; and then we made our way through pleasant fields to the old Château of Hugomont, where doubtless the interest culminates; for could Napoleon have taken this nook of earth he would probably have conquered the world.

"Hugomont was the beginning of the obstacle—the first resistance that Napoleon encountered at Waterloo, and it proved too much for him. It was a château then; now it is only a farmhouse, with the usual outbuildings, though nothing seems to have been repaired since that eventful day."

We passed through an arched gateway into a courtyard, and found ourselves at the door of a little chapel —only a shell now; four white-washed walls; a wooden crucifix over the door; over the head of the crucifix a

square hole stopped up with hay; two circular windows, one on each side; and the door of which we have spoken,—such is the chapel to-day.

In this little chapel men massacred each other without mercy till the blood flowed in a sluggish crimson tide through the open door. Then the French, masters of the chapel for a moment, set fire to it, and it became a furnace; the flames filled all the building—the door burnt, the flooring burnt, the altar burnt, but the wooden Christ was not burnt—the flames nibbled away at the toes and then went out. "It was a miracle," the country people say, and point—as evidence—to the blackened feet.

With the miracle I have nothing to do. I can only record that I saw the wooden Christ hanging over the western door as it must have hung on that fearful day, only covered now with cobwebs and dust.

From the chapel we went into the yard, and were shown a well no longer used. There are two wells in the yard, but one only has bucket and windlass attached. The other well, to quote the words of Victor Hugo, "is full of skeletons. After the action the corpses were hastily interred. Death has a way of its own of harassing victory, and it causes pestilence to follow glory. Typhus is an annexe of triumph. This well was deep, and was converted into a tomb. Three

hundred dead were thrown into it, perhaps with too much haste. Were they all dead? The legend says 'No!' And it seems that, on the night following the burial, weak voices were heard calling from the well."

It was silent enough when I looked down, save for the slow dripping of water that echoed weirdly down in the darkness. But the dead were sleeping peacefully enough, and all of them forgotten.

From the yard we went into the garden, of which the story is told of "six Voltigeurs of the First Light Regiment having got in and unable to get out, and, caught like bears in a trap, accepted combat with two Hanoverian companies, one of which was armed with rifles. The Hanoverians lined the balustrades and fired down; the Voltigeurs fired up, six intrepid men against two hundred, and, having no shelter but the gooseberry bushes, took a quarter of an hour in dying."

From the garden we mounted by a few steps into the orchard, an oblong plot of land, with a wood at the farther end, scarcely covering, I should think, half an acre of ground. This orchard is surrounded by a brick wall, and the thirty-eight loopholes that the English soldiers pierced to fire through are still to be seen. The French as they came up did not see this wall, for a few paces from it is a quick-set hedge,

and, thinking they had only to carry the hedge, they found the wall an obstacle and an ambuscade. This was the beginning of Waterloo, so the historians say. The English Guards behind the loopholes received the advancing French with a perfect storm of canister and bullets, and Stoye's brigade was dashed to pieces against it.

Yet, nothing daunted, the French still pressed forward, and, having no ladders to scale the wall, they climbed up with their nails. Then a hand-to-hand fight took place under the trees, and all the grass was soaked with blood. It must have been a horrible struggle, for in that little orchard fifteen hundred men fell dead in less than an hour.

I tried to realise the picture as I walked under the trees that summer's afternoon; but in vain. It required a more vivid imagination than mine. There was no longer any sound of confusion or strife. The silence of the sultry afternoon was unbroken save for the singing of the birds and the voices of the harvesters in the neighbouring fields. From the tree against which Major Blackburn leant to die I was permitted to gather a few apples; but the apples were by no means plentiful, for all the trees are old, and there is not one of them without its cannon-ball or bullet.

Getting tired at length, I lay down on the grass,

with my elbow on a slab that covered a grave, and read again Victor Hugo's graphic description. This is the way he finished :—

"Bauduin killed; Foy wounded; arson, massacre, carnage; a stream composed of English, French, and German blood furiously mingled; a well filled with corpses; the Nassau regiment and the Brunswick regiment destroyed; Duplat killed; Blackman killed; the English Guards mutilated; twenty French battalions composing Reille's corps decimated; three thousand men in this Château of Hugomont alone sabred, gashed, butchered, shot, and burnt—all this that a peasant may say to a traveller at the present day, 'If you like to give me three francs, sir, I will tell you all about the battle of Waterloo.'"

At the Hotel Musée, for the payment of half a franc, —perhaps it was a franc,—we were shown through a small museum of relics. There were bullets in abundance, a small pyramid of cannon-balls, French eagles by the score, and buttons by the gross. A number of helmets adorned the walls dinted and gashed, flags torn into ribbons, coats and caps rotting with age, and gloves crumbling to dust. Of boots and shoes there was a remarkable variety, as there was also of teeth, human and otherwise; a plentiful supply of swords and bayonets, rusty, gapped, and broken, with a long line

of skulls to set off the other relics, and give interest as well as completeness to the collection.

These skulls interested me most of all. I thought there could be no deception about them. I knew that buttons, bullets, and eagles—imported from Birmingham—were sown each year with the crops and ploughed up when wanted, and so one is apt to get suspicious on the matter of relics. But there had been no sowing of skulls, as far as I could gather. Moreover, these skulls were not for sale, which would have been the case could they have been supplied to order. Then there was another mark of genuineness. They had nearly all been pierced by bullets, many of them in the centre of the forehead. Evidently there were some good marksmen seventy years ago, and these poor fellows died with their face to the enemy. *They* got the bullets, and their officers the glory.

After carefully inspecting the skulls, and remarking that scarcely one of them had a tooth missing, we repaired to the coffee-room for a five o'clock dinner. The proprietress of the hotel is an English lady—a descendant of one of the heroes of Waterloo. She has spent, however, the greater part of her life in France and Belgium, and so, while she speaks English with great fluency, she speaks French like a native. We

found her conversation very entertaining and her dinner excellent. None of the mysteries of the Continental *table d'hôte*, with its twelve or fifteen courses, but a real straightforward English dinner, the first we had seen on the Continent, and, alas! the last.

The afternoon was well advanced when we sauntered back through the quiet fields to the little station at Braine Allend, and took train again for Brussels. The evening, however, was so hot that we sat out of doors till nearly bedtime, sipping coffee and chatting about many things. Our party was now to be broken up. We had met as strangers many of us, in the same railway compartment on leaving London, but had soon patched up an acquaintance, and had been travelling together ever since, so that we seemed like old friends. Englishmen abroad are not nearly so taciturn as they are at home. Now, however, the time had come when we must part company. Some were going on to Paris, others into Holland, and the rest of us were starting early next morning for Cologne, so that our conversation grew serious as the daylight waned, and we wondered if ever we should meet again. So we parted, bidding each other *bon voyage* and farewell.

## CHAPTER IV.

### COLOGNE.

On starting for Cologne we were joined by two Roman Catholic priests; at least we judged them to be such. Their clean-shaven faces, wide-awake hats, and peculiar black cravats left no doubt upon our minds as to their profession; while, to make assurance doubly sure, they had no sooner taken their seats opposite to us than each drew from his pocket a miniature prayer-book, and began reading therefrom, their lips moving rapidly all the while. One of them was quite a young man, stout, ruddy, and good-looking; the other was past middle age, rather thin, but with a refined and pleasant face.

They seemed very shy at first, I thought, and when at length I ventured a remark about the weather, the only reply I got was a simple "Oui, Monsieur."

"They are not English, at any rate," was my thought. But that was not the only mistake I made that day.

The journey from Brussels to Cologne takes about six and a half hours, through Mechlin, Louvain, Liège, and Aix-la-Chapelle. The country on the whole is a very pleasant one, though without any very striking features, if we except the towns, which, however, we had not time to examine.

On crossing the Prussian frontier there was the usual examination of baggage by the Customs' officers, but they were very considerate, and gave us no more trouble than they could help. We flattered ourselves that we were not very suspicious-looking individuals; moreover, were we not in the company of two priests? And so smiling our thanks to the officials, we hurried across the platform to the German train that was waiting for us.

This was a most decided change for the better. Not that there was any fault to be found with the Belgian railway carriages,—they seemed quite equal for comfort to anything we have in England,—but the German carriages were simply luxurious. I speak more especially of the second-class, in which we travelled. They are fitted up on the model of our English first-class, but with this advantage,—that the seats, in addition to being well-cushioned, are built on springs, so that jolting is out of the question, and travelling is almost a luxury. The German *first*-class carriages are

upholstered in crimson velvet, and are gilded and mirrored to perfection. But it is said that only Englishmen and fools travel in them. There is also a fourth-class on some of the lines, that provide standing room only.

Long before we reached Cologne our clerical companions had grown quite friendly, for they were not Frenchmen, as I had supposed, but English, hailing from somewhere near London.

"Have you travelled this way before?" asked the elder of the two, as our train was running into the station at Liège.

"Yes," answered my companion, J——; "but our wives are strangers to this part of the Continent."

"Ah," he said, bowing to the ladies, and smiling, "it is a great advantage to travel with those who have been over the ground before. My friend here," turning to the young priest, "is paying his first visit to these parts."

"Then you have been here before?" I asked.

"Once," he answered, "about six years ago, I spent a very pleasant holiday in rambling about these quaint old towns."

The ice was now fairly broken, and for the next two or three days we travelled together, and found them most congenial companions.

About half-past three we entered the Rhine Valley by the Königsdorfer tunnel, and saw in the distance the white spires of the great Döm Cathedral of Cologne shining in the sun. Punctually at four o'clock we entered the station, and by five o'clock we had done ample justice to a *table d'hôte* dinner at the Hotel de Hollande. We now sauntered forth to explore the city, for we had yet before us four or five hours of daylight, and we were glad also of the opportunity of stretching our legs after sitting so long.

Of course the first and chief object of attraction in Cologne is the Cathedral. I had seen it some four years previously, when half its beauty was hidden away behind heavy scaffolding. Now, however, the scaffolding had been taken down, and it stood before us in all its matchless beauty, the finest picture wrought in stone the world has ever seen. Every niche, every pinnacle, every window, every doorway, every flying-buttress, is a study, a perfect dream of loveliness. At first it is difficult to realise its magnitude, and it is only by comparing it with the four and five storied buildings in its immediate neighbourhood that one can form any idea of its enormous proportions. At the western front there are two towers that rise to a height of 400 ft.; these are surmounted by openwork spires of 115 ft. more; so that the pinnacles pierce the sky at

a height of 515 ft., or 110 ft. higher than the cross upon St. Paul's. To stand and trace those beautiful Gothic lines narrowing upward towards the sky, to mark the marvellously delicate detail of every part, and the wonderful harmony of the whole, is to receive impressions not easily forgotten. Take the central doorway in the western front, with its deep embrasure, ornamented with life-size figures of the Prophets and Apostles, from where the arch springs, and when you have mastered its details, go on to the next doorway, and study that in the same way, and so make the circuit of the building, and slowly the amazing beauty of the wonderful design will dawn upon you, until it will seem almost incredible that one brain could have designed it all.

And yet, strange to tell, the name of the architect is lost. They speak of him as "The Master" in Cologne, and tell a curious story. How when in the year 1247 Conrad of Hochstaden determined to build a cathedral that should outrival every other cathedral in the world, he advertised for plans, which were to be sent in by a certain date. At this time there was living in Cologne a famous architect, from whom Conrad expected great things. This man set to work and drew plan after plan, but could never satisfy himself. Now and then in moments of self-forgetfulness, or in dreams of

the night, there would flash upon his mental vision a cathedral so magnificent that he would start up in ecstasy; but always before he could reproduce it on paper the idea had vanished. Again and again in his dreams he saw this wonderful cathedral, but no sooner was he fully awake than it was gone.

The day before the plans had to be submitted, the poor architect was in despair, for he had no plan to submit, and as night came on he could no longer abide in the house, but wandered away into the forest of the Siebengebirges to hide his misery. The night was dark, with storm and rain, and only when the lightning glared could he see the path before him. The excitement of Nature seemed to accord with his feelings, and he found a grim pleasure in listening to the roaring of the storm and the crashing of the thunder overhead. At length a fierce flash of lightning struck an oak near him, the trunk of which began to burn brightly and illumine all the scene. But what was his surprise to see a man step out of the burning tree, holding a roll of parchment in his hand, and this being unrolled, the astonished architect saw the cathedral of his dreams, with every detail worked out to perfection.

Of course the man with the parchment was none other than his Satanic Majesty, who, after dosing the poor architect with Rhenish wine, succeeded without

much difficulty in getting him to sign the parchment with his blood. This was equivalent to bartering his soul for the coveted designs.

The next day the designs were presented to Conrad and accepted, and early in the following year, 1248, the foundations of the new building were laid, and the walls began to rise slowly above the ground. On a brass plate which was built into the wall the architect's name was engraved, that coming generations might read and revere his memory. Meanwhile, however, the architect grew despondent. The thought that he had bartered his soul for earthly fame weighed heavy upon his spirit, and he found no rest night nor day. In his distress he sought counsel of a priest, to whom he confessed his sin, and was urged by the man of God to retire to a convent, and seek to atone for his great wickedness by fasting, prayer, and penance. This he did, and ultimately obtained pardon, and died in the fear of and favour of God. But on the night he retired to the convent—the legend runs—the brass plate bearing his name was pulled down, and a large portion of the wall along with it. On the following day it was built in again, but only to be torn down on the succeeding night. This went on for some time, until it was clearly seen that the plate would have to be left out, or the work stopped altogether. And so it

came about that the Cathedral was built without the name of its designer. His work remains, but not his name; that has been lost in the mists of years.

Such is the substance of the legend you may hear any day in Cologne, if you care to listen. A legend, too, not without its moral to those who care to find it. For my own part, I could not get the story out of my head as I passed into the interior and stood in a blaze of coloured light that was streaming in through the richly-painted windows. In some respects the interior is almost more impressive than the exterior. It is cruciform in shape, with double aisles in the nave, and single in the transept; its whole length is 400 feet, and the rich stone ceiling is 150 feet above the floor. The choir is richly embellished with statues and frescoes, and is surrounded by eight chapels and a "treasury," the latter containing the skulls of the Three Wise Men of the East, the bones of Archbishop Engelbert, and many other very wonderful relics, if you are silly enough to believe all that is told you.

I am never enthusiastic about relics, but I confess that the Cathedral impressed me as no work wrought by human skill ever impressed me before, and all the while I kept thinking of the nameless architect who had planned it all. How strange that he should have been forgotten. But no! It was only his name that

was forgotten, and what did that matter? Call him "The Nameless," or "The Master," it is all the same. *He* lives in his work, and will never be forgotten while that noble building stands. It is by their deeds that men are remembered, and not by the names they bear. The name itself is nothing. If we would live in the memories of men, we must do something, and do something worthy. Unfortunately the present age is one of sham and shoddy and jerry-building. Men do not labour for all time now as Conrad did, and those glorious builders of the past. Houses are made to sell nowadays, not to live in. Miles and miles of pretentious ugliness and vulgarity are run up in all our cities every year, in utter disregard of either health or taste. Even many of our public buildings must come under the head of "cheap and nasty," while pretentious Gothic (?) churches, with no end of spire, are "run up" by contract for three or four thousand pounds, in utter defiance of every canon of art. It would be most laughable were it not so sad.

> "In the elder days of art,
> The builders wrought with greatest care
> Each minute and unseen part—
> For the gods see everywhere."

But in these days we build as if God saw nowhere, and men were stone blind. It is to be hoped—with a few

notable exceptions—that the present generation of builders will be forgotten, for surely it is better to rest in oblivion than to be remembered with contempt. Of course I use the word "builders" here in its broadest sense. I do not refer to the labourers—they do what they are paid for; nor to the contractor—he must get a living; nor to the architect, for doubtless he suffers most of all. It is the vulgar pretentiousness of the age, that demands what it is not willing to pay for; that *will* have the outside show, though it be stucco and veneer; and fancies itself grand, when it is only vulgar.

I do not wonder that the people of Cologne are proud of their Cathedral. Such a thing of beauty must be a joy for ever. If a man has any sense of beauty at all, I do not think it is possible for him to get tired of it, or grow indifferent to its presence. Moreover, to the native of Cologne that noble structure must mean more than it can possibly mean to any stranger. Can he forget that it was more than six hundred years in building, or be unmindful of the strange vicissitudes through which it passed in that long period? Is not the history of his city for six long centuries bound up with the history of his Church? And then, too, what strange and tender associations must gather round that noble pile! What stories of accidents and hair-breadth

escapes must be handed down from father to son through a score of generations; what curious legends will cling to every pillar and lurk in every dark recess; what an air of mystery and enchantment will envelop every part! There is, perhaps, not a family in the city but is in some way connected with its erection, or has its own story to tell. And so the native of Cologne looks at it with tenderest affection, for it is woven into the very texture of his life.

Since the year 1823 more than £800,000 have been spent in its restoration, and less than four years ago, in the presence of the German Emperor and most of the nobility of the land, the openwork spires were completed, and the top stone put on amid great rejoicing. A beautiful illustration, I thought, of God's work in the world. For nineteen centuries the glorious temple of truth has been rising amid the murk of earth. The fathers have laboured and passed away, and the children have taken their places, and so the work has gone slowly on, and still it rises in beauty and in strength, and surely the day is drawing nearer when amid the song of angels the top stone shall be brought off with rejoicing "grace, grace unto it."

The great Cathedral aisles were growing dim when we emerged again into the open air and made our way through the narrow, crooked streets to our hotel, and

for the rest of the evening we sat at our window, overlooking the rushing Rhine, watching the gaily-painted steamers plying on the river, and the busy crowds hurrying across the bridge of boats.

With the exception of the Cathedral and the river, there is nothing of special interest in Cologne. It is true the sewers are *on* the streets instead of being underneath them, and it is said to be able to boast of about eighty distinct smells. There are also about forty "original" vendors of eau-de-Cologne, and touts innumerable. But these things are deserving only of a passing remark.

In attending service at the Cathedral next morning, I noticed on one of the pillars near the southern door a curious statue that puzzled me for some time to know what it represented. The figure was that of a very big, muscular man, leaning on a staff, that might be a young tree, and carrying on his shoulder a young child, while around his feet was a raging surf of water that took him nearly up to the knee.

I have since learned that this figure represents the giant St. Christopher, who—the legend says—was very anxious to find some one stronger than himself, and also a God to worship. So he set off on the tramp in search of his object. At length he reached a river, where an old man told him he might find work, and perhaps con-

tentment, in helping people across, and for some time he acted upon the old man's advice. But one wild night he thought he heard a child crying to be taken across, and after some groping in the darkness he found the little fellow, and placed him upon his shoulder and commenced to cross the river. But the wind began to blow, and the rain to fall in torrents, and the waves to swell around his legs, while the child upon his shoulder got heavier all the while. Christopher wondered at this, and looking up into the child's face, which was very beautiful, he asked him how it was that he was so heavy, and the child answered that "it was because he bare himself all the sin of the world." Then the giant began to stumble and sink beneath his load, but the child at length leaped from his shoulder and drew him ashore. Then Christopher fell down at the feet of the Child Jesus and worshipped Him, for he had found One who was stronger than himself.

Leaning against a pillar in the shadow of Saint Christopher, I stood during most of the service watching the performance; and later in the day, while waiting for the river steamer at Bonn, I wrote in my diary my impression of it.

We had come on to Bonn by train, for the Rhine takes an enormous bend between it and Cologne, while the country is flat and uninteresting. So we

left the latter place by train an hour after the boat had started, and then had time to see Bonn before the boat arrived. The day was glorious, and as we sauntered down the shady avenues in front of the University, with the birds singing all around us, and the air laden with the breath of ten thousand flowers; with the glorious Rhine shining before us, and the Drachenfels looming clear and distinct on the opposite bank of the river, the world to me never seemed more bright or beautiful. The boat was not in sight when we arrived at the little quay, so I took the opportunity of writing up my diary. I make the following extract:—

"This morning we visited the Cathedral again, and saw the people and the priests at their worship. I think the people who came to pray were sincere; they looked as if they were. But what about the mummery of the priests? Did they believe, I wonder, that the great God could really care for their crossings and kissing of the altar-cloth, washing of hands, tinkling of bells, and genuflexions? Is that really worship? If they meant it to be, I suppose it is 'God seeth not as man seeth, man looketh at the outward appearance, but God looketh at the heart.' Yet to me, I must confess it, the mummery of the priests was painful in the extreme. It had all the appearance of being acted, every part studied and arranged according to

programme. I stood for a long time leaning against a pillar, watching the performance, until, utterly disgusted, I could stay no longer. Yet to watch the country people, and even the children, at their devotions was pleasant indeed, for *they* seemed as if they meant it."

But now the steamer is descried coming swiftly up the river, with gay bunting streaming in the wind, and ladies and gentlemen in holiday attire promenading the long stretch of deck. I thrust my note-book into my pocket, and think no more of priests or saints. Before us is a glorious day, for the skies are clear and the winds are soft, while work and care for the present are far behind us.

## CHAPTER V.

### UP THE RHINE.

SEVERAL years have passed away since I was first privileged to sail on "the proud waters of the Rhine;" yet I have a very distinct recollection that my first impression of it was somewhat disappointing. Not that it did not come up to my expectations, and yet it was not just *what* I expected. It is true I had many times seen paintings and photographs of bits of Rhine scenery; but I think now that those pictures could not have made any deep impression upon my mind, for when I first gazed upon the reality it was very far from being what I expected.

But that is a very common occurrence. We rarely find things, or places, or people what in our minds we had pictured them; and in some instances so wide is the difference as to occasion us quite a shock of surprise and disappointment. I had expected to find the Rhine flowing between steep and lofty mountains, with sometimes an over-hanging cliff or perpendicular wall

of rock; and now and then a long stretch of solitude, where no human habitation or sign of life was visible. In all this, however, I was disappointed. The river flows between gently-undulating hills, which scarcely ever rise to more than a thousand feet in height. The perpendicular walls of rock are nowhere to be seen. Even the celebrated Lurlei Rocks are not perpendicular, and only rise to a height of four hundred and fifty feet. While as for my dream of long stretches of solitude, it quickly vanished; for the Rhine banks are so thickly studded with villages that you never lose sight of one ere you are in view of another.

And yet, disappointed as I was, I was not pained. If the scenery was less wild than I had expected, it was more beautiful. If I missed the lofty mountain, in its place was the "castled crag," the wooded slope, the shady hollow, the gentle upland, and the terraced vineyard, sloping down to the water's brink. And so I let the Rhine of my fancy go without a pang, and welcomed the reality, which was more pleasing than all my dreams.

We had not been long on board the steamer before we discovered our clerical friends of the previous day, the elder of whom was busily engaged sketching the "Castled Crag of Drachenfels." In this he was quite expert, and so rapid and sure were the strokes of his

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pencil that I was tempted to try my skill in the same direction. But the rushing steamer changed the point of view so rapidly that I was very soon disgusted with my performance, and gave up the whole thing as a bad job. It was like attempting to sketch a panorama, and, as the steamer would not stand still for my convenience, I concluded I had better wait until I got on *terra firma* before I made a second attempt.

The beauty of the Rhine scenery may be said to commence with the Drachenfels, one of the peaks of the seven mountains, and which rises above the river to a height of 1,066 feet. Its name—a curious legend tells us—was given by the inhabitants of the country in Pagan times, because in one of the rocky caverns—which is known to-day as the Dragon Hole—dwelt a most formidable dragon, "with jaws large enough to swallow several men at once, and armed with a triple row of teeth; a body of extraordinary length armed with scales, which in the sunshine glittered with a thousand tints, and a serpent-like tail, which it could twist into a thousand curves." This formidable monster was the terror of the neighbourhood, and was regarded by the Pagan priests as a kind of divinity, whose anger they sought to appease by offering human sacrifices, consisting of people who had incurred the hatred of the priests, or had been taken prisoners in war.

By-and-bye, however, Christianity began to spread on the opposite bank of the Rhine, and one day two powerful Pagan princes, Rinbod and Horsrik, made a raid into this Christian community for the purpose of securing victims to appease the hunger and anger of the dragon. Among the victims thus secured was a beautiful Christian maiden, with whom both brothers fell desperately in love, and as a consequence a quarrel ensued, which might have ended seriously had not the priest interposed and declared that neither should marry a hated Christian, but that she must be thrown to the dragon.

Against this decision there was no appeal, and so the maiden—with many others who were to share her lot—was conducted to the summit of the Drachenfels, where, bound to a tree, she calmly awaited her fate. Amongst the crowd who came to witness the tragedy was Rinbod, the nobler of the brothers, full of grief and sadness that such a beautiful and holy maiden should thus be sacrificed. In a few minutes the monster rose from his place, and, seeing his victim, advanced rapidly with open jaws to swallow her up.

"Whoever saw the dragon in its complete deformity and hideousness" (runs the quaintly-worded legend) "was obliged to tremble and be filled with horror; also the maiden almost lost her senses as destruction

seemed to near her, and in holding, as if for defence, the cross before her, she exclaimed in the great anxiety of her soul, 'Lord, my God, help me in this great affliction!' and lo, what happened? The monster, that had already opened his jaws to swallow the bound offering, retired at the sight of the cross as if struck by lightning, and fell uttering a frightful and wide-echoing howl into the Rhine, the waves of which covered him for ever."

Of course Rinbod hastened to embrace the maiden, and led her in triumph away, "while the astonished Pagans demanded to belong to a religion whose God so visibly helped His people."

The legend closes in these words:—"The maiden undertook to spread Christianity by her preaching. Eagerly these heathens learned the tenets of the Evangelists, and soon thousands received the holy baptism. But the first and most zealous Christian was Rinbod, and the maiden rewarded him with her hand. Then they built a castle on the same Drachenfels, and he became the founder of the race of Drachenburgers that flourished about ten centuries."

Scarcely anything, however, of the ruined castle is to be seen from the river, and we had not time to scale the rocky acclivity, and so make ourselves more fully acquainted with this romantic spot.

As our steamer pushed her way farther and farther up the river, the scenery became more and more picturesque and—I had almost said enchanting. Every turn in the river revealed some fresh beauty, and brought into view some crumbling castle, standing like a grim sentinel on the wooded height. While, added to this, there was scarcely a glen, or crag, or gloomy keep that had not some curious legend associated with it, and which threw a kind of glamour over all the scene, and made us feel as though we were pushing our way into the very heart of fairyland.

Now we are passing a verdant island lying soft and green in mid-river, and, looking back for a moment, we catch a splendid view of the Drachenfels, with its six sister mountains vividly outlined against a soft blue sky. Now to our right we catch a glimpse of a ruined arch, all that remains of the Castle of Rolandseck; and we recall the story of the beautiful Hildegunde, who, believing that her lover, Roland, was lying dead on the battle-field of Ronceval, in Spain, retired to a convent, and was soon allowed to take the irrevocable vow. But Roland was only wounded, and as soon as possible returned to the Rhine to claim the hand of his bride, only to discover that she was lost to him for ever. So day by day from his castle tower—of which that single ruined arch remains—

he would gaze down into the gardens of the nunnery, where he saw her form, and perchance sometimes her face. But one day he saw her not, and the next day a funeral procession passed along among the trees to the burying-place. Hildegunde was dead! Ronald never spoke or smiled again, but every day he gazed wistfully at the burying-place among the trees; and one day when his squire came to him he found him sitting in his usual place, but Roland was dead, and in death his half-closed eyes were still directed to the last resting-place of Hildegunde.

Now Rolandseck has dropped into the rear, and Unkel is passed, and Apollinarisberg and Remagen, from which the now celebrated mineral waters are shipped. And now the character of the scenery changes. On the left the hills vanish and leave a plain, and on the right the heights are clothed in vines. And still our steamer cuts her way past Erpel and Linz, and the handsome new Castle of Arenfels, and now the quaint old town of Andernach looms into sight, of which a beautiful legend is told by Longfellow in "Hyperion." So beautiful is it that I would like to reproduce it here, but time and space forbid. And still we push on

"Between the banks that bear the vine,
And hills all rich with blossom'd trees,

And fields which promise corn and wine,
And scatter'd cities crowning these,
Whose fair white walls along them shine."

Surely it is an enchanting country, and our spirits rise and our pleasures increase with every hour of this delightful day.

Soon after noon we reached Coblentz and halted, though not for very long. Coblentz is beautifully situated at the conflux of the Moselle and Rhine, and is a delightful place to spend a day, as I can testify from experience, or many days for that. For here you are in the very heart of Rhineland, and within easy reach of some of its most picturesque places. On the opposite bank of the river, which is crossed by a bridge of boats, stands the celebrated fortress of Ehrenbreitstein, spoken of sometimes as the Gibraltar of the Rhine, and is considered one of the strongest fortifications in Europe, both in respect of its natural position and its artificial defences. It has cost, it is said, more than two millions of money, and is calculated to stand for ten years all the appliances of modern warfare. It is sincerely to be hoped that this calculation will never be put to the proof.

I have a very vivid recollection of climbing the long flights of steps leading up to this great fortress in the year 1879, and getting therefrom a fine view

of the surrounding country. Right and left stretched away the Rhine Valley, and before us the beautiful valley, or rather plain, of the Moselle, though all in shadow now, for the sky was overcast, except in the north, where it was perfectly clear, and of the palest blue imaginable.

Later in the day we took a stroll through the rustic little village of Niederberg, where nearly all the houses are covered with vines, and then out again into the open country, between rows of apple and chestnut trees, until we reached the "Pilgrimage Church of Arenberg," considered one of the greatest curiosities of its kind in the country, and frequented by pilgrims from all parts of the world.

Externally the church calls for no remark, but no sooner had we passed within the doors than we found ourselves in what seemed an enormous grotto, the walls being covered with tens of thousands of bits of stone, glass, marble, lava, and curious minerals and shells. Over the altar are coloured figures representing Christ between two thieves. To the left of this is a model of Christ in the sepulchre, with light let in on the figure through yellow glass; while at the west end of the nave is a figure of the infant Christ in a cradle, with a blue light falling upon it. Several of the frescoes above the pillars struck

me as being of more than average merit, though I had not time to examine them very closely.

The old priest, who had ministered to the villagers for more than forty years, and had done a great deal of the church's ornamentation with his own hands, was very attentive to us, and evidently took great pleasure in pointing out the peculiar features of his handiwork

On returning we left the main road and struck off across the fields, and descended at length by a steep path into the Rhine Valley. I shall not soon, however, forget the view we got from the height above the river. Before commencing the descent, we paused for awhile to enjoy the scene, and while looking northward, towards Cologne, the clouds suddenly drifted apart, and the sunshine streamed through, lighting up the Rhine Valley as far as eye could reach. What a transformation! Our halting-place became a veritable Pisgah, and all the fruitful land before us lay steeped in golden light. Down at our feet the glorious river broke into endless ripples, that danced away into the dreamy distance till the sparkle ceased in a band of light, that intersected with many a curve the rolling panorama of hill and plain, and narrowed upward like a satin streak till lost in the light of the northern sky. How long the vision lasted I

cannot tell. But the light went out as suddenly as it came, and when we descended the hillside the earth lay in shadow once more.

BINGEN ON THE RHINE.

In the months and years that followed that glorious picture often came back to me. Indeed, I do not think it will ever fade from my memory while my

brain can think at all. And now I was in Rhineland again, and under happier auspices than before.

And still we press on, the scenery growing in interest and beauty all the while. Indeed, the real beauty of the Rhine lies between Coblentz and Bingen. The hills are higher and more steep, "and adorned with ruins outvying one another in antiquity and picturesque appearance;" while the turns in the river are so sudden that you find yourselves sometimes completely shut in with lofty hills, and can see no way of escape from the placid lake across which you are sailing; then a sudden bend reveals another lake, and an entire change of scene, with hills so beautiful that they might be

"Harmonies of music turned to shape."

As the hours pass, and the sun dips lower in the western sky, the effect of light and shadow becomes more marked. Now the river is all in shadow. Only the wooded slope of the eastern shore can see the sun and fling his radiance back. On our right the hills frown dark and cold, and the terraced vineyards lose themselves in a general haze. But now a sudden westward bend and the sun is full upon us once more, and the wavelets flash and glimmer like threads of gold, and dance away till lost in the haze we have

THE LURLEI ROCK. [*To face page 61.*

left behind; and so the shadows and the sunshine alternate come and go, till one gets almost bewildered with the ever-changing scene.

As we neared the whirlpool below the celebrated Lurlei, or Lorelei, Rocks, there was a general movement among the passengers; for who has not heard the story of the beautiful water nymph, who far away in the misty past dwelt in these cool grots and rocky cells, and bewitched the boatmen with her enchanting songs, and as the men tarried to listen, their boats would be drawn into the vortex of the whirlpool, and so they would perish? "The legend is so true read as an allegory," says a modern writer, "that the moral has been pointed over and over again in poetry and prose, and by writers of every nationality."

Of the German song by Heine I have before me two translations—one by L. W. Garnhan, B.A., and the other by Mr. Samuel Clemens, better known as Mark Twain. The former is so bad that, did space permit, it would be worth inserting as a curiosity. That, however, by Mr. Clemens is so good that I will transcribe it in full:—

"I cannot divine what it meaneth,
This haunting nameless pain.
A tale of the bygone ages
Keeps brooding through my brain.

"The faint air cools in the gloaming,
And peaceful flows the Rhine.
The thirsty summits are drinking
The sunset's flooding wine.

"The loveliest maiden is sitting
High-throned in yon blue air;
Her golden jewels are shining,
She combs her golden hair.

"She combs with a comb that is golden,
And sings a weird refrain,
That steeps in a deadly enchantment
The listener's ravished brain.

"The doomed, in his drifting shallop,
Is tranced with the sad sweet tone,
He sees not the yawning breakers—
He sees but the maid alone.

"The pitiless billows engulph him:
So perish sailor and bark.
And this, with her baleful singing,
Is the Lorelei's gruesome work."

I have not time to point the moral of this; nor is there need that I should attempt what has been so often done. Moreover, new scenes are opening up before us, which need a passing word. Scarcely have we left the Lurlei Rocks behind us than we find ourselves nearing a singular-looking building standing in the middle of the river, and surrounded by dangerous slabs of rock. People have compared it to the Castle

of Chillon, though not in reality much like it. It is called the PFALZ, and is about as weird and desolate-looking a place as I ever saw. The dungeons are below the water. But the agony and terror of those confined in that dark vault can never be told nor even imagined. How long since the last prisoner crouched there, listening to the awful and mysterious voice of the river, plashing and surging around, is not known. Let us hope, whoever the poor refugee may have been, that deliverance came to him soon.

Now we are passing a beautiful little island, but without a name as far as I could gather. And now Bacharach is passed, and we enter the heart of the "Rhine-wine" district. Here in many places the sides of the river are steep and rocky, and yet have been converted into vineyards by the industrious peasants. The soil they have carried up in baskets and laid in terraces on the face of the rock. These thrifty people of both sexes, standing among the vines on the dangerous slopes, wave their hands and hats as we pass, and seem, if one may judge from appearances, contented and happy.

To mention the names of all the ruined castles that crown the hilltops would be tedious, and to narrate all the wonderful legends connected with them would fill a volume.

But now Bingen looms in sight,—"Sweet Bingen on the Rhine,"—where we are going to land. But before we do so we must have a peep at the "Mouse Tower," standing on a rocky islet in the middle of the river. Who has not heard the story of Bishop Hatto and the rats, told so well by the poet Southey?

Famine was in the land, and all the people were starving, while Bishop Hatto's granaries were full of corn. At last, to quiet the people who clamoured for bread, he invited them to gather in his barn, and when it was full he shut the door and fired the building and burnt them all.

> "'In faith 'tis an excellent bonfire,' quoth he,
> 'And the country is greatly obliged to me
> For ridding it in these times forlorn
> Of rats that only consume the corn.'"

But the next day the country swarmed with real rats, and a man came running to the Bishop.

> "And he was as pale as pale could be;
> 'Fly, my Lord Bishop, fly!' quoth he.
> 'Ten thousand rats are coming this way—
> The Lord forgive you for yesterday!'
> 'I'll go to my tower in the Rhine,' replied he.
> 'Tis the safest place in Germany.'"

So the Bishop retired to the Mouse Tower, and imagined that he was safe. But the rats were not to be defeated.

"For they have swum over the river so deep,
And they have climbed the shores so steep;
And now by thousands in they crawl
Through the holes and windows in the wall;
Down on his knees the Bishop fell,
And faster and faster his beads did tell,
As louder and louder drawing near
The saw of their teeth without he could hear;
And in at the windows, and in at the door,
And through the walls by thousands they pour,
And down through the ceiling and up through the floor,
From the right and the left, from behind and before,
From within and without, from above and below,
And all at once at the Bishop they go.
They have whetted their teeth against the stones,
And now they pick the Bishop's bones.
They gnawed the flesh from every limb,
For they were sent to do judgment on him."

## CHAPTER VI.

### ACQUAINTANCES.

We made several acquaintances during our sail up the Rhine, whose company and conversation contributed not a little to the pleasures of the day. Tom ——, a negro from the United States, was one of the pleasantest fellows I have ever come across. He was travelling with an American family as courier and general factotum, and was evidently held by his master—and, indeed, by all the members of the family—in the highest esteem. Nor do I wonder at this. He was always in a good temper, was as nimble as a kitten, was always near when wanted, and seemed to know everything. He made all arrangements, as far as I could see, and the family obeyed; and if master, or mistress, or daughters wanted to know anything, Tom was the oracle consulted. He spoke English, French, German, and Italian with equal ease and fluency, and passed from one language to another as occasion required without the least difficulty; for there were nearly all nationali-

ties on board, and Tom had the happiest knack I know of getting acquainted with strangers.

He was brought up, he told me, in a French settlement in Canada; but, hearing every day of his life the English language spoken, he learned to speak both languages when a child with equal ease. German and Italian he had taken considerable pains to acquire, and now he thought he liked the German language the best of all. It was not soft and musical, like French and Italian, but it was more expressive, he thought, than either, while there was a rugged grandeur and strength about it that even the English language could not reach.

He had had no schooling, he informed me, and yet he must have been an omnivorous reader, and, what is more, he had evidently digested what he had read; for, whatever subject came on the *tapis*, he was able to express an intelligent opinion concerning it, yet always in a modest, retiring fashion that was very pleasant to witness. I took quite a fancy to Tom. I felt that he was the white man's equal in every way. Ay, and vastly superior to some of the English and American fops who were strutting the deck as though they were monarchs of all they surveyed. These perfumed dandies, who haw'd and hem'd, and looked at everything through the medium of a sixpenny eye-glass,

and affected no surprise at anything, would doubtless feel it beneath their dignity to shake the hand of a black man, and yet I felt that, for genuine worth, the negro would outweigh a dozen of them.

> "Is there for honest poverty
> That hangs his head and a' that,
> The coward slave we pass him by;
> We dare be poor for a' that.
> For a' that and a' that,
> Our toil's obscure and a' that,
> The rank is but the guinea stamp,
> The man's the gowd for a' that."

The negro was but a servant, but he was a *man*—ay, and a *gentleman*—"for a' that." He had a black skin, but he had a clear head, and, I believe, an honest heart. And so I was proud to make Tom's acquaintance, and glad to renew that acquaintance at a later period in the city of Paris.

Through Tom I made the acquaintance of a young German who was returning home for his holidays, who in turn introduced me to the Rev. Dr. F——, of Strasburg, a Presbyterian minister, though of the modern school. The Doctor was quite an acquisition to our party; for, being a German, he knew everything about Rhineland, and was able to tell us a hundred things concerning which our guide-books were silent. Yet every now

and then amid his conversation the Doctor would pause abruptly, while his eyes would catch a far-away expression, as though he saw beyond the sunny vineyards and the castled crags that crowned the slopes; and we knew that for the moment his thoughts were otherwhere, and that other scenes were passing before his mental vision.

"You will excuse me for being so absent," he said at length, "but my thoughts run faster than the steamer, and I'm home to Strasburg before I am aware; and yet I dread going home."

"Indeed!" we said, in some surprise.

"Ah me!" he said, "less than two months ago I left home with my wife to attend the General Assembly at Edinburgh. And she, being English, was so pleased to visit her native land again—I cannot tell you how pleased she was; and I was as pleased as she. But we had only got as far as Brussels when she was seized with a fit of apoplexy and died. Ah me! I was nearly distracted, and the difficulty I had in getting her body conveyed to England no tongue can tell; but my very grief and despair made me resolute, and I succeeded; and so I have left her sleeping in the churchyard of her native village, and I, as you see, am returning alone."

And with a quick gesture he wiped away the tears

that had gathered in his eyes, and then went on again,—

"When I have been away before, I have always eagerly anticipated my return, for I knew she would be there to meet me and give me welcome. But now how can I go back to the home that is home no more, and to the hearth that is desolate? When I was in England and Scotland, there were many things to occupy my thoughts and distract my attention from my loss. But now, as I am nearing home, the sense of my bereavement comes home to me as I think I have never felt it."

We could do no other than assure the kindly Doctor of our deepest sympathy, for we had all been deeply moved by the story of his loss.

"Thank you," he said. "Sympathy is very pleasant to me, and I know I have the sympathy of my Church and people, for she was loved by them all. But nothing can lighten the burden of my loss; but, God helping it, I can bear it. And now I beg your pardon for troubling you with my griefs, and yet I feel all the better for having told it you; and now we will talk of other things, and, if you won't mind, I should like you to introduce me to your friends the priests, for, to tell you the truth, I am curious to see the sketches the elder of the two is making."

"With pleasure, Doctor. But they are only chance acquaintances, but exceedingly agreeable, as you will find them."

So we left the Doctor and the priests in earnest conversation, and sauntered across to the other side of the deck and sat down. I was busy writing up my diary, and alone, when the Doctor came to me again.

"Well, I was never so deceived in my life," he said.

"Deceived?" I replied, looking up. And I could hardly help laughing at the comical expression on the Doctor's face.

"Ay, deceived," he answered; "and I feel uncommonly like resenting it. It seems like travelling under false pretences."

"Why, what in the world is the matter?" I said, feeling rather amused at the Doctor's earnestness.

"Matter?" said he. "Why, those friends of yours are not priests after all."

"Not priests?" I answered. "Who said so?"

"They said so; at least, they said they were not Roman Catholic priests."

"What are they then?"

"Clergymen of the Church of England, or, as they call themselves, 'Anglican priests'—Ritualists, I think you call them in England. Now, don't you think it's

too bad for Protestants to stick on the Roman Catholic label after that fashion?"

"It may be," I said, "they do not claim to be Protestants. Many of the ministers of the Church of England, I am told, do not believe in the Reformation."

"Then I say they have no right to minister in a Protestant church," said the Doctor, interrupting me. "It's not honest; it's receiving pay on false pretences. In the commercial world it would be denounced as a fraud, and I wonder you English people submit to it."

"And, then, as to the labels," I said, "I am not in favour of any class of men labelling themselves. Why should ministers dress differently to any other class of men, and proclaim themselves wherever they go as belonging to a different caste?"

"And why shouldn't they?" said the Doctor, straightening at the same time his own white tie.

"Well," I said, laughing, "you have just objected to these men labelling themselves."

"As priests!" he interrupted.

"Just so. But they believe themselves to be priests; at least, they call themselves priests, and label themselves accordingly. You call yourself a minister, and label yourself ditto. My objection to all these labels is, that they are relics of a priestly assumption of superiority. 'We are not common men,' they

proclaim. 'We have been separated from the world and all its secular pursuits. We have received special graces through a Bishop's fingers, or a Moderator's charge, or a President's benediction, and henceforth, that an ungodly world may make no mistake nor treat us with undue familiarity, we dress after a fashion peculiar to our holy caste, and wear a white tie, emblem of our immaculate purity, and assume a stand-off attitude, as much as to say, "Keep your distance, for I am holier than thou."' No, no, Doctor, I object to such labels *in toto*."

"Ah! you're extreme," he said, laughing; and then we changed the subject. But I noticed that the Doctor held no further intercourse with our clerical friends. He was evidently sore at being "deceived," as he termed it. According to his theory of honesty, these men were not honest; they were travelling under false pretences; were receiving Protestant pay for doing Catholic work; were Papists in heart and practice, while claiming to be clergymen of the English Church. And the good Doctor could not reconcile such practices with his conception of Christianity, and so avoided them after he had made the discovery.

At Bingen we shook hands and parted, with the promise, on our part, that if we ever visited Strasburg we would be sure to call on him. From Bingen we

went on to Mayence by train, for the Rhine scenery ends at the former place, the remaining stretch of country being exceedingly flat and uninteresting. We were soon whisked across it, however, by train, and reached Mayence before the labouring river steamer had accomplished a quarter of the distance.

After a substantial tea-dinner, we started out to renew our acquaintance with the quaint old city. Like several other continental cities that I know, though by no means large, a stranger may easily get lost in in. The streets twist and turn and start off at the most curious angles, rendering navigation most perplexing to the uninitiated. Mayence may be said to be the birthplace of the printing-press; for it was here Gutenberg was born, and the house in which he lived still remains, and perhaps to the average Englishman the most interesting sight in the city is the bronze statue of the great inventor, erected by subscriptions from all parts of Europe. The great red-sandstone Cathedral is decidedly ugly—that is, judging by the small portion of it that is visible, for it is so completely hedged in on every side by shops and dwelling-houses that it is impossible to get a good look at it, and next to impossible to get near it. I have a very distinct recollection of a Sunday evening in Mayence, when, after a vain search in the Clara-Strasse for the English

Church, and being told at length that the service was discontinued, I started off to attend service in the Cathedral. I did find my way into it at last, but it was after wasting the best part of an hour in a fruitless endeavour to get near it; the most tantalising part of the affair being that all the while I could see the great clumsy octagonal tower looming up scarcely more than a stone's-throw away,—now on my right hand, now on my left, and now right in front of me,—and yet I was unable to get near it. However, I espied a dark, narrow passage at length that seemed to lead in the direction I wanted to go, and so I made a dash for it, and landed at length inside the Cathedral doors a few minutes before the service concluded. For the sake of its great antiquity, however, and the strange vicissitudes through which it has passed, the Cathedral is an object of deep interest, especially to the antiquarian, notwithstanding that very little of the original structure remains, reminding one of the Irishman and his grandfather's gun. His father had put a new lock to it, and his brother Mike a new stock, "an' meself a new barrel, but bedad an' it's grandfather's gun all the same."

Had we been staying any length of time in this neighbourhood, we should have renewed our acquaintance with Wiesbaden, which is within easy reach of

Mayence. I had, and still have, some pleasant recollections of a visit to this fashionable and popular health resort. For situation Wiesbaden reminds one somewhat of Bath, though the town is laid out on a much grander scale. It is, I suppose, the gayest place in Germany, and certainly is as beautiful as it is gay. Many of the streets are exceedingly fine, and lined on either side with trees of giant growth. The hotels are like palaces for size and splendour of decoration, while some of the churches are most unique in their styles of architecture. Here the *élite* of Germany gather season after season, with the Emperor at their head, to find health and pleasure, and certainly there is plenty to charm the eye, please the ear, and captivate the imagination.

The Kursaal is a delightful place. Long reaches of shady avenues stretch away as far as eye can reach. The trees are nearly all of massive growth. The lakes are laid out in the most ornamental style, while quaintly-designed fountains fling jets of water fifty feet in the air, which fall in showers of spray on every side, and catch rainbow tints in their descent. Added to this, crowds of well-dressed people saunter idly along the shady avenues or by the clear waters of the lake. Rank and beauty roll by in splendid equipages, and well-trained bands discourse sweet music

all day long. Fifty thousand people come here every year to spend their money, gather health, and find amusement.

We had no time, however, to visit Wiesbaden again; so, after a pleasant stroll on the banks of the Rhine, we returned to our hotel, where, on entering the reading-room, we came face to face with the worthy Doctor, whom a few hours previously we had left on the steamer at Bingen.

"Well," he said, looking up in surprise, "I did not expect to see you again so soon. But where are your clerical friends?"

"In their room, we presume, as we have not seen them since tea."

"Oh, well, sit down and let's have a chat. Don't you think you can change your plans a little, and go on to Strasburg to-morrow? A day or two longer, now you are away from home, can't make very much difference; and I should like you to see our Cathedral. It's the finest in the world, you know."

"No, I was not aware of it."

"It is, though. I know you greatly admire Cologne Cathedral, but it's nothing to ours, except for bigness. It's bigger, I admit—bigger than anything of its kind in the world; but the spire of Strasburg Cathedral, for beauty of design and for exquisite finish of work-

manship, beats all creation, as the Americans say. Now do come."

"Afraid we can't, Doctor."

"You'll regret it if you don't, I assure you. Why, the view from the spire is magnificent. There are only 725 steps" (with a little laugh); "but that's nothing to people of strength and nerve, and the view will amply repay the labour. And then there is the clock. You have heard of Strasburg Clock?"

"Yes."

"Well, I tell you it's the most marvellous thing of its kind in the world. You never heard the story of it very likely?"

"No."

But I will give the story in the words of the old chronicler:—"As the world-renowned building of the Strasburg dome was completed, the magistrates had the wish to ornament the high steeple with an artistic clock. Long no master could be found to whom the execution of such a work could be confided, but at length one announced himself from a foreign country, named Isaac Habich, an already venerable man, who offered to arrange an incomparable clock-work on the steeple. The offer was joyfully accepted, and the master began his laborious work. After several years of unremitting labour, the work was finished, and all

who saw it regarded it with justifiable admiration. The clock not only indicated the hour, but the day and month of the year. There was also a large world-ball, with the rising and setting of the sun, as well as the eclipses of the moon and sun each time exactly as they occurred in nature. Mercury standing with his staff pointed out all changements, and each constellation in its turn stepped forward as soon as its domination commenced. There also stood forth the personification of Death, who, shortly before the strike of every quarter, advanced to seize the clock-hammer, while, at the same time, from the other side the figure of the Redeemer appeared and sent back Death; only the full hour Death struck with the hammer. This ingenious clock, as well as an excellent chime belonging to it, which toned the most edifying Church-psalms, seemed to be a real master-work, and the city gloried in its possession. But the very excellency of the work excited in the minds of the magistracy the wish that Strasburg might be and remain the only city that could boast of it; and this wish led to the horrible design that, instead of rewarding the master for his art and diligence, they would put out his eyes.

"In order to have an excuse for this cursed act, they accused the master of not being able to complete the work without demoniacal help, and by torture and

imprisonment they wrung from the master the confession of his guilt. However, before the infamous men could carry out their judgment, the master declared that he must do the last work to the clock, and finish the wheel-work that would be impossible for any one else to complete, and begged to be still once allowed to ascend the steeple. This explanation appeared so weighty with the chiefs of the city, that they could not but comply with it. So they conducted the condemned man to the steeple, and after he had filed and altered some time, he declared that all was completed. Immediately afterwards the dreadful act of depriving the old man of his sight was committed. But soon it was known that the chimes and works were still. The cruel authors of the inhuman act perceived now too late that the master of the artistic work had intentionally destroyed it, to revenge himself on the barbarous vanity and ambition of the magistracy. And so indeed it was. The badly-treated artist said he had annihilated his own work, and that nobody would ever be able to repair it and set it in motion!

"And so to-day the stranger visiting Strasburg Dome is shown the immovable wheel-work, and none can look at the fine mechanism without regret that, as the blind master predicted, till now no artistic hand had power to order the machine and bring it into activity.

"In the clock made by Schwilgue, 1838—1842, some parts of the old clock were used. At midnight of December 31st of every year the clock regulates itself for the next year."

Pleased, however, as we should have been to see the Cathedral at Strasburg and the wonderful clock, we could not do so without hopelessly disorganising our plans. Our route we had arranged before we left England, and we were determined, if possible, to abide by it. So thanking the Doctor for his pressing invitation, we announced our intention of abiding by the plan we had already marked out.

"Well, be it so," he said; "some future day, perhaps, we shall meet again." So we parted. Whether we shall ever meet again time alone will show.

Next morning we started for Bâle by way of Worms and Heidelberg, our clerical friends still keeping us company. I shall not attempt a description of the pleasant Rhine Valley, along which we rolled hour after hour, bounded on the left, for I do not know how many miles, by the dark, pine-clad hills of the Black Forest; nor will I speak of the pleasant and quaint old towns through which we passed; nor dare I attempt to reproduce here a long discussion with our travelling companions on such subjects as "Apostolical succession" and "Baptismal regeneration," lest I should not do

justice to *their* arguments, and more than justice to *ours*. Suffice it to say, that they argued with great fairness and good-humour, and I trust we did the same. That we thought we had the best of the argument goes, of course, without saying.

Our only source of discomfort during the day was the intense heat. When we left home (July 10th), the weather was rainy and cold; but all the while we had been steadily pushing southward, till now within a week we found ourselves in the midst of harvest, with the thermometer standing at 90° in the shade. Beyond Oos (the junction for Baden-Baden) we saw large quantities of tobacco growing—a plant I had not seen before in its natural state. At Offenburg our clerical friends, who were bound for Schaffhausen and Lake Constance, bade us good-bye, and an hour later we rolled into the city of Bâle. We drove at once to the Hôtel Trois Rois, where we got letters from home, and then sauntered out to explore the city.

It was our intention to spend the night here, and go on next morning to Lucerne. But after dinner we altered our plans a little. We discovered that a train left Bâle at 8 p.m., arriving at Lucerne 10.5, and as it had been so hot during the day, we thought it would be much pleasanter to go forward in the cool of the evening, and resolved to act accordingly. Moreover,

speaking for myself, now that I was in Switzerland, I was eager—nay, impatient—to see the wonderful Alps. I had read so many descriptions of their awful and impressive grandeur and beauty, and had longed for so many years to compare the reality with the Alps of my dreams, that my heart fairly ached with eager anticipation; and I was all impatience to get beyond the dark Jura Mountains, and catch my first glimpse of those snowy heights ere another night closed around me. What more natural, therefore, than that we should come to the resolution we did? In our excitement we almost forgot fatigue, and so eight o'clock found us within the narrow precincts of a railway carriage once more, our hearts beating high with hope, our faces towards Lucerne.

## CHAPTER VII.

### LUCERNE AND THE RIGI.

BÂLE, or Basle, contains no particularly striking feature, if we except the cathedral—a structure of quaint design—and the river Rhine, which here rushes past with all the impetuosity of a mountain torrent. But we had not left the town far behind us before we had unmistakable evidence that we were fairly in Switzerland at last. The drooping pine trees darkening the steep slopes above us, and the quaint wooden châlets perched hither and thither on the hillsides, or huddled more closely in the valley below, gave an unmistakably Swiss aspect to the scene, and brought vividly back to our memory pictures we had seen and descriptions we had read of this the most picturesque country in Europe.

Our route lay along the side of a deep, well-cultivated valley, bounded in the distance by the dark heights of the Jura, through—or underneath—which we should presently pass. The evening was oppressively hot,—at

least it seemed so to us smoke-dried Northerners,—and we were thankful to find that the Swiss carriages were so constructed that all the windows could be let down, in addition to the doors being left open at each end of the carriage. The train was by no means crowded, so that we were able, without inconveniencing others, to lean our elbows on the sill, and keep our heads in the open air a good part of the distance. By this means, also, we were able to get a better view of the country through which we were passing. Nearly all the châlets had narrow galleries running round them, in which women sat in the shadow of the overhanging eaves, busy with their mending. Sometimes their husbands —or, perhaps, sweethearts—sat by their side quietly smoking, while in the meadows below the children were busy at their play. The picture was a very pleasant one, looked at in the quiet of the evening, with the day slowly dying over the western hills.

Slowly our train wound its tortuous way up the steep gradient, and halted at length on what seemed a small plateau, about 2,000 feet above the level of the sea. Looking out of the window, we saw before us the entrance of the Hauenstein Tunnel, which our guide-book informed us was 2,970 yards long, and that during the construction of which in 1857 sixty-three workmen were buried alive by a fall of earth. I need not say

how inspiriting such information was to us just then; nor will my statement be called in question when I say that I for one heartily wished I was safe out at the other end. I am not fond of tunnels at the best of times. It has struck me occasionally that the atmosphere in some of the longest of them is not all that could be desired. Doubtless tunnels are a great convenience, but they are a great bore in more senses than one. I do not know if I have been through longer tunnels than the one I am now speaking of or not. But I do know that I have never been so long in getting through one, either before or since.

For the first seven or eight minutes in that tunnel I flatter myself that I behaved like a philosopher—that is, I sat quite still, and tried to feel unconcerned. But after that I am sorry to say that my philosophy failed me. My courage seemed to ooze through every pore of my body. I felt as though I had a mountain upon me,—I knew I had one above me, perhaps that will account for the sensation,—my heart bumped against my side in the most unaccountable fashion, my breath came short and thick, I could hardly distinguish at times whether we were moving or standing still. Perhaps there was a fall of earth in front of us—perhaps there was one behind us. Suppose there should be one at each end? Were we at a standstill? No,

we are moving still; but in what direction it seems impossible to determine. Still on,—or back, nobody seems to know which,—but all the while the atmosphere becomes more sickening and oppressive. "Perhaps the engine men are suffocated," feebly suggests some one. "If they are not, they deserve to be," is the unfeeling answer. "We shall be suffocated anyhow," growls a third, "unless we soon get out of this hole." "Or perhaps," feebly responds the first voice; "but there—we are going faster now." "And time we did." The voices cease now, the noise in the tunnel grows louder, the lights flicker and threaten to go out altogether, the carriages begin to roll with the increasing speed, then the roar suddenly stops, and down goes every window in a moment. We are out at last!

How long we were in the tunnel I cannot tell, but I should judge from fifteen to twenty minutes at the very least. It seemed an hour. We were all impatient, too, to see the snowy Alps ere the daylight quite faded away. Just beyond the tunnel on the right-hand side, our guide-book informed us, the white peaks of the giants of the Oberland would loom into sight. We had also been informed by several travellers that that first glimpse of the Alps was wonderfully impressive. How expectant we were I will not attempt to describe.

All the carraige windows on that side of the train were lined with eager faces. Now for the vision that was to reward the weariness of the day! There is the break in the near mountains through which the distant Alps are to show their snowy crests. Now the train is rounding the curve. Look! Look!

Alas for human hopes! So slow had been our progress through that horrible tunnel, or so rapidly had the shadows of evening gathered round us, that, though we strained our eyes until they ached, not the faintest outline of the Alps could we see. It was a bitter disappointment—too bitter for words; and so we resumed our seats in silence, and scarcely any one spoke again during the rest of the journey.

It was quite dark when we reached Lucerne, so we drove at once to our hotel, and with as little delay as possible retired to rest. We were delighted with the suite of rooms apportioned to us—large, airy, well furnished, and at the front of the hotel. These facts we took in at a glance, and then six hours of complete oblivion (I speak for myself).

About five o'clock next morning I awoke fresh as a lark. There was none of that heavy, drowsy feeling with which one has to struggle in our more northern latitudes, and I may mention here that this was the case every morning while we were in Switzerland. As

SUMMIT OF THE RIGI.

soon as we were awake we were wide awake, without the least inclination to fall asleep again.

I knew by the light streaming into the room, despite the stout Venetian blinds hanging *outside* the windows, —which, by the way, is a splendid arrangement for keeping the rooms cool,—that the morning was fine and clear; and, getting into my clothes with all possible despatch, I threw open the window, pulled up the heavy Venetian blind, and stepped out on the stone balcony.

Oh that vision! May it never fade from my memory! For awhile I stood amazed, bewildered, almost intoxicated with the exceeding beauty of the scene. My wife's hand laid upon mine recalled me to myself, and then we brought out chairs and sat down, that we might enjoy at our leisure one of the loveliest prospects on earth.

Let me try to describe it. Down at my feet commenced the Lake of Lucerne, that widened out into endless curves and bays, and stretched away before me placid as a meadow pool, till it got tangled and lost among the distant hills. Its colour indescribable, neither blue nor green, but a lovely tint partaking of both. While all around the margin of the lake the orchards and meadows sloped down to the water's brink.

Straight in front loomed up the Rigi Mountain, verdure-clad to the very summit. To the right old

Pilatus, rugged and bare, frowned down upon the lake. And between the two—away beyond the low intervening hills—rose up the wondrous Alps, peak upon peak in endless confusion, clad in their thick mantle of everlasting snow, their sharp pinnacles shining dazzlingly white in the morning's sun. And over all this a sky of faultless blue, unflecked by a single cloud; and you have the outline of a picture to which no words can do justice. It must be seen to be realised, and then its beauty will enter into the life to remain a joy for ever.

Our first excursion was to the top of the Rigi, the most popular, as well as the most populous, mountain in Switzerland. This arises from several circumstances. To begin with, it is comparatively easy of ascent, even to those who go up on foot, while those who use the railway find no difficulty at all. All they have to do is to sit still and enjoy the ever-increasing beauty of the scenery. Moreover, from its isolated position—standing out like a sentinel to guard the Alpine Range—it commands an unrivalled view of country; and added to this, its summit is often perfectly clear, while its neighbour Pilatus is wreathed in clouds. Hence its popularity.

Pilatus is much the more imposing mountain of the two, its upper part consisting of wild and serrated cliffs; while the Rigi is covered with fresh green pastures to

the very summit. Then, too, Pilatus is a thousand feet higher than the Rigi, and yet this very advantage, coupled with its more westerly position, is, from the tourist's point of view, its great disadvantage, for every storm approaching from the north or west is sure to be attracted by its serrated pinnacles, and so, while its rival basks in sunshine, Pilatus is shrouded in dense clouds. Indeed, according to the best authorities, it is the popular and generally trustworthy barometer of the district. An old saying is thus rendered :—

> "If Pilatus wears his cap, serene will be the day;
> If his collar he puts on, you may venture on the way;
> But if his sword he wields, at home you'd better stay."

On the first day of our visit, however, Pilatus did not even wear his cap, a circumstance which augured well in the matter of weather.

The Rigi is a huge pile of conglomerate, rising to a height of six thousand feet. Its base—which is twenty-five miles in circumference—is three-fourths surrounded by water. On the south and west sweeps the Lake of Lucerne, and on the north the Lakes of Zug and Lowerz both lave its feet.

About nine o'clock on the day in question we walked across the promenade from our hotel to a small wooden landing-stage, and were soon on board one of the lake

LAKE LUCERNE

steamers, *en route* for Vitznau. I can conceive few things more delightful than a sail on this most beautiful of lakes. How the waters rippled in the morning's sunshine! How green and cool the lower slopes of the nearer hills looked as we sped on our way! How picturesque the broad-eaved châlets dotting the mountain-sides and peeping out from among the trees! And how unspeakably glorious the snow mountains looming high over all, and piercing the deep blue of the sky with a hundred shining points!

At first it was difficult to realise that the châlets and hotels fringing the lake were really human habitations; they looked like children's toys, so dwarfed were they by comparison with the huge mountains looming up behind. Speaking for myself, it was not the greatness of the mountains that first impressed me, but the littleness of everything else, and for some time I struggled in vain to get at a true idea of the relative proportions of things.

We were not long in reaching Vitznau, where we found a train waiting to take us to the top of the mountain. I say "train," though it would be more correct to say "carriage," for the trains on this now celebrated railway consist of one carriage only. The engines have their boilers tilted up on end. The railway has a central rail which is cogged, and into this

endless cog fits a wheel underneath the engine. This is in reality the driving wheel, by which it slowly "cogs" itself up the steep gradient, pushing its solitary carriage in front. We found the floor of the carriage arranged in terraces, so that, sitting or standing, we were always on the level. The sides of the carriage came up to our elbows as we sat; for the rest, it was open, permitting an uninterrupted view of the wonderful panorama stretched out around us, and which increased in impressiveness as we ascended the steep acclivity.

It was a curious sensation to find ourselves steadily ascending without any effort of our own, though we soon got used to it, and accepted all the strange sensations as a matter of course, though one part of the route did somewhat try our nerves. After passing through a short tunnel, we came out on a frail, spider-web bridge swung across a deep gorge, down which a mountain torrent plunged with terrible velocity. I think most of us held our breath while we were crossing; some of the ladies actually shut their eyes, which was a foolish thing to do, as they missed in consequence one of the most striking scenes of the route. I suppose it was fancy, but when we got to about the middle of the bridge it seemed to sway from side to side. A few faint "Oh's," and "Ho's" betrayed the fears of the

weaker-nerved, and most of us drew a long breath when we found ourselves safe on the other and upper side; then we laughed as though it were a great joke, and tried to make it appear that we had no thought of danger, though I think nobody was deceived by this little fiction.

Still on and up, until the train ran out on a little plateau, and we were informed that we had reached the top. We had yet a little climb before us ere we reached the Kulm, the highest point of the mountain. That gained, the whole panorama burst suddenly upon our view.

But here I am half disposed to throw down my pen in despair, for I am certain no words of mine can possibly do justice to the scene. I will only, therefore, give a few facts, and leave the rest to the reader's imagination. Commencing at the foot of the mountain, which at this point seems almost perpendicular as we look down, and stretching away as far as eye can reach, is a wonderful panorama of hill and dale, mountain and plain, forest and fell, lake and river, town and village, embracing a circuit—according to Baedeker—of nearly three hundred miles. Such a scene, viewed from such a height, is impressive in the extreme. We begin to count the lakes—thirteen in all. Those of Lucerne and Zug appear within a stone's-

LAKES ZUG AND LUCERNE FROM THE RIGI.

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throw of where we stand, and coming so near together that it seems as though a man could easily jump across the intervening space, and yet we know that invisible waggons are toiling across that plain even while we gaze. Slowly our eye wanders on and on. Beyond Lucerne and Zug, beyond the Lake of Zurich, beyond the town. Beyond the dark Jura Mountains and the sombre peaks of the Black Forest. Beyond Bâle, and Baden, and the valley of the Rhine. Beyond Strasburg even, and around to the basaltic cones of Hohenhöwen and Hohenstoffeln (close together), and the Hohentwiel in Swabia. A wonderful picture truly. Travellers have said that there is not a finer in Europe. If there be, I should like to see it. Yet while we gazed it seemed almost incredible that the circuit could be so vast. Three hundred miles! Was it possible that the retina of the eye could contain a picture so great? Yet there it was—one vast rolling landscape, the distant towns like grey dots upon a map. All was in miniature. The lakes seemed only pools, the forests looked like pincushions, the mountains like gently-rolling hills, the rivers like threads of silver glinting in the sun, the valleys like hollows in a churchyard between the graves.

Reluctantly at length we turned our backs upon the scene, and faeed the other way. What a contrast!

No longer a rolling plain, but mountains! mountains! around us, beyond us, rising up in endless confusion, and all in spotless white. One hundred and twenty miles of snow-clad Alps crowded upon the vision all at once. The other picture was fine, but not to be compared to this. My eyes grew dim with emotion. The scene was overwhelmingly, awfully grand. I do not know how others have felt in gazing upon the same scene,—except that one of our party in writing home said that the only words that could express the feeling were, "Let us pray,"—but for myself the pleasure almost amounted to pain until I had got used to the presence of those mighty hills, so white, and solemn, and still.

We spent the whole of the day on this "mount of vision," and regretted that the day was not longer. We felt as if we could not look long enough on those impressive scenes, and left the "Kulm" at length with pain.

Suddenly J—— halted. "Let's have one more look at Arth," he said, and back we turned again.

On the north side the mountain is very precipitous, and is protected by a wooden rail. Standing at this point and looking down, you see a village just below you, and close to the eastern end of the Lake of Zug. This is Arth, and, seen from such a height, it looks for

all the world like a child's toy village. In the bay of the lake is a little steamboat at anchor, but it looks no longer than your hand, and might have been shaped by a schoolboy with his pocket-knife. The village church might be a toy Noah's Ark, and the houses "wooden bricks." We presume there are people in the streets, but we cannot see them, and know not if the black spots in the meadows are cattle or not. We try to follow the line of the St. Gothard Railway, but this our eyes refuse to do. Several times during the day we went to look at this picture, and always with pleasure.

And yet in this case, also, pleasure and pain came very near each other, for a little way above the village, and directly opposite where we stand, there is a great scar on the mountain-side, denoting the course of the disastrous landslip of 1806, which completely buried the large and prosperous village of Goldau and three smaller villages, with five hundred of their inhabitants, converting the smiling landscape into a scene of desolation.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### LUCERNE AND THE RIGI (*continued*).

HAD the day been any other than Saturday, we should have remained on the Rigi all night, and at least made an effort next morning to see the sunrise. But we had no desire to spend Sunday on the top of a mountain, even though we could ensure fine weather all the while. So we resolved to forego the pleasure—and inconvenience, and cold, and scramble—of seeing the "sunrise," and return to Lucerne the same night.

Before retracing our steps to the little station, we made another circuit of the Kulm, and then discovered, on reference to our watches, that we were too late to descend by the train we had at first intended; so we sat down again, contentedly enough, and gave ourselves up to thorough-going enjoyment of the scene that could never cease to charm. Indeed, as the sun sank lower in the western sky, the various features of the great rolling stretch of country spread out before us became more vivid and distinct. The mountain ranges

seemed to lift themselves nearer the sky, while heavy shadows lay upon their eastern slopes. The far-off heights of Swabia seemed stalking nearer as we gazed, while the nearer rivers, that we could descry meandering among the hills, had been changed since morning to molten gold. Down at our feet the waters of the Lakes of Zug and Lucerne were ever on the change, now lying dark and still as a forest pool, now gently rolling in long lines of light and shadow, and now rippling and flashing in the sun as a breeze swept across their surface. How we enjoyed the scene, sitting there, a perpendicular mile above it all, with the glory of the sunshine all around us! And still, as the sun sank lower, great billows of yellow light washed over the snowy Alps, and suffused them with a glory that was almost insufferable. The dark recesses of the morning came out to see the light of the eventide. The shining points we had noticed earlier in the day retired one by one, and over all their snowy crests hung rainbow tints, that changed more rapidly than the colours of a kaleidoscope.

I have no doubt, from all that I have read, that "sunrise on the Rigi" is a far more magnificent spectacle than anything we saw, and yet the picture we beheld that day was worth coming all the way from England to see.

I think it was J—— who remarked, as we sat there on the Kulm, trying to drink our fill of beauty, that "it was good to get on high ground occasionally, for the sake of the prospect, and to be enabled also to get an idea of the relative size and value of things." And many times since then I have felt the truth of that remark. It was very pleasant sailing on the lake below. Very picturesque were the sloping orchards, and the sombre patches where the pine trees grew. Yet the prospect was necessarily circumscribed; on every side we were shut in by lofty hills. But here on the Rigi we could see fifty times more. It was as though the power of seeing had been enlarged. Here, too, mountains and hills, and lakes and rivers, and towns and villages stood out in their relative proportions, and the confusion we had experienced in the lowlands had all passed away. And this is true also in another and a higher sense. It is only as we rise to high moral planes that the spiritual vision becomes clear, and extended prospects are vouchsafed to us. If we are content to remain on planes that are morally low, we must be content with limited prospects and beclouded vision—content to walk amid confusion and uncertainty. But if we will scale to the moral heights that shine above us, then, like the pilgrims in Beulah Land, we shall catch glimpses, though afar off, of the

life that is to be. Spiritual realities unseen before will grow into shape before our eyes. Things

> "Unknown to feeble sense,
> Unseen by reason's glimmering ray,"

will unfold their wonders before our eyes of faith, and we shall learn to appreciate the truth that "the things that are seen are temporal, but the things that are not seen are eternal."

Leisurely at length we sauntered down the grassy slope, with the still blushing Alps full in view, and found the little train just ready to start. The solitary carriage was nearly full, and we had some little difficulty in securing seats. This done, however, we tried to brace our nerves for the descent, for the steep line of rails looked positively appalling from the top. For the first few yards the road is level, and while traversing that space we felt quite at ease. Then suddenly the little engine ducks its head, and goes trotting down stairs at a rate that nearly takes our breath away. Involuntarily we set our feet firmly on the floor of the carriage, and push against the back of the seat with all our might, as though by that means we would check the rate of descent. Of course everybody knows it is a silly thing to do, and yet everybody does it. After we have trotted down two or three hundred yards, how-

ever, we feel somewhat reassured, and sit more at our ease. Yet directly the train perceptibly increases its speed, we set our backs up again in a most unmistakable fashion, while every foot firmly presses the floor.

I think it was Mark Twain who said that "a man has no difficulty in remembering his sins while coming down that railway." A remark that is quite suggestive and to the point. It is all in vain to pretend that you have no fear—all in vain that you are told that there never yet has been an accident. In spite of yourself, the thought obtrudes itself, Suppose the boiler should burst? or suppose the piston should break? or suppose that cogged driving-wheel should fly in half? what then? Boilers have burst before now, and pistons have broken, and cog-wheels have flown into pieces; and if any of these things should happen, nothing in the world could save us. No brake could hold the train in such a steep. Though all the wheels were locked, we should rush like a flash of light down that steep declivity and be buried in the lake below.

We slacken speed at length, and then come to a stop, while two perspiring pedestrians, who started long before us to make the descent on foot, get in; then on we go again. A little farther down we pull up again at a siding, for an up-going train to pass us.

We notice that the carriage is quite full, and the little engine puffing hard behind seems to have quite as much as it can manage. All these people are going up to spend the night on the Rigi, that they may be in time to see the morning's sunrise. We wave hats and handkerchiefs as they pass us by. Then our whistle sounds, and down we trot again.

By this time we are feeling quite courageous, and but for that awful gorge we are nearing, and the spider-web bridge swaying across it, our last fear by this might have vanished. Our engine-drivers, however, have evidently no misgivings as to the stability of the bridge, for we approach the chasm at quite a trot, and the next minute we feel as if suspended in mid-heaven. Those of us sitting near the doors push our heads out as far as we can do so safely, but we only get a passing glimpse of the foaming torrent swirling and leaping beneath us. A minute later we enter the tunnel, and are enveloped in darkness.

The greatest part of the journey is now accomplished, and the most dangerous part also; consequently fear gives place to confidence, and the silence born of timidity is succeeded by almost boisterous mirth. For the rest of the way we have laughter, and snatches of song, mixed up with such a confusion of languages as one rarely hears.

On the steamboat, which we find waiting for us, is a company of Swiss guides returning to Lucerne, who become the centre of attraction during the rest of the way. Fine, brawny young fellows they are, their faces brown as nuts, and their wide-awake hats decked with sprigs of the mountain rhododendron. A few peasant girls keep them company; sisters, or perhaps sweethearts, dressed in their Sunday best. Scarcely have the paddle-wheels begun to turn ere they form themselves into a circle and start a song—a sweet, plaintive Swiss melody, that sinks and swells in perfect time and in exquisite harmony. They do not sing for money, for no collection is made. They evidently sing for the love of it, and such singing one rarely hears, for no voices, I think, are so rich in tone as those you find in mountainous regions. When the song was ended, we gave them a hearty clap, which the girls acknowledged with a smile and a blush, and the men by raising their hats. Then they started again, something wild and triumphant this time, in which the name of Tell occurred. A patriotic song evidently, though I could only understand a word here and there; but it was pleasant to watch their faces, and the sparkle in their eyes—pleasanter still to drink in the rich, full melody that was floating all around us.

So we floated back over the emerald green waters in

the dying of the day, and after a late dinner sat out on the balcony till it was dark, watching the pleasure-boats skimming the lake, and the lights peeping out on the mountain-sides as the darkness deepened, and when it was too dark to see anything more, we rang for lights and sat down to write letters and make notes of the events of the day. Then till nearly midnight we sat chatting; for the morrow was Sunday, and we could lie late if we felt so disposed.

We were in a very different humour to the previous night. Then we retired to rest with a feeling of bitter disappointment; now we were thankful that we had been disappointed. If we had seen the Alps on the previous night, it would have been a poor and an imperfect view at best, and so, by being compelled to wait till morning, we obtained a view a thousand times more perfect and impressive.

"Don't you think," said L——, who was in a serious mood, "that it is often so in life? We long for things and even pray for them, and then are pained and disappointed because we do not get them; and yet if we will only be patient and wait long enough, we get something a great deal better in their place."

"Ay, and we value them all the more for the waiting," J—— interposed.

"Then," said E——, who was generally the silent

member of our party, "you think it is good to be disappointed sometimes?"

"Most certainly I do," J—— answered. Disappointments are a necessary part of life's discipline; they help us to appreciate the blessing when it does come."

"On the same principle," L—— suggested, "that it is good to be hungry for the sake of the dinner."

"I don't say for the *sake* of the dinner," said J——, who was by no means indifferent to the pleasures of the table, and regarded this sally as a kind of home-thrust. "Still, as eating is a necessity, I say it *is* a good thing to be hungry, so that we may enjoy what is a necessity of existence."

To this view of the case no one raised any objection, and then we drifted away to other topics, until it was time to separate for the night.

Next morning, soon after ten o'clock, we wended our way to the English Church, and were pleased to see, by the time the service commenced, that the church was quite full. In the congregation was a large number of sunburnt young fellows in holiday attire; and it was very pleasant to see how heartily they engaged in the service. Too many English people when abroad treat the Sabbath as any other day of the week, and far too readily fall into continental ways. At Lucerne, however, as far as I could see, there was a marked absence

of Sunday desecration, and certainly the English and American visitors mustered well at religious worship.

The morning service was all that one could desire — simple, hearty, and thoroughly devout. The singing was taken up by the whole congregation, and if slow, there was a good deal of soul in it, and I might add body also. The church service was beautifully rendered, and the sermon as good as anything I have heard for a long time.

To me it was unspeakably pleasant in this land of strangers to join in prayers, hallowed by precious memories, and in songs and hymns familiar since childhood. All the more pleasant, doubtless, because I was far away from home and from the little flowers whose root was in my heart. Often during the day my thoughts turned homeward, and the prayer, unbidden, rose to my lips that, not only we, but those we had left behind, might be kept from accident, and danger, and sudden death.

In the evening we attended service in connection with the Free Church of Scotland held in a Roman Catholic chapel. I had never attended a Scotch service before, and I cannot say that I was very favourably impressed with it. After the English Church service, it seemed exceedingly bald and jerky. The sermon, if a trifle long, was thoughtful and vigorous, though

hardly adapted, I thought, to a little company of pilgrims far away from their homes and travelling through a strange country. A few earnest words to our hearts and sympathies would have been far more welcome, under the circumstances, than the discourse to which we listened on "Liberty *versus* Licence."

After the service concluded, we stood for a while on a small plateau in front of the chapel enjoying the exceeding beauty of the scene. A good part of the town lay below us; and straight before us, with all his pinnacles tipped with gold, stood old Pilatus, a perfect picture of rugged grandeur and strength. Below us, to the left, lay the Emerald Lake, like a large mirror set in a frame of green hills, and beyond the nearer hills was the long line of snow mountains, all flushed with the glory of the setting sun; from gardens all around us came floating up the breath of ten thousand flowers; for during the afternoon there had been a thunderstorm, with a heavy downpour of rain, and now the breeze, as it swept past, was deliciously cool, as though it came to us from off the distant fields of snow. What an evening that was! So full of beauty and peace—so full of God. It seemed as though we breathed the very breath of heaven, and stood amid the bowers of Paradise, so steeped with satisfaction was every sense.

The minister came out at length, and shook hands

with us in a genial, hearty fashion, and finding that we were staying at the same hotel, we walked away together, and a little later—over a cup of tea—we had a pleasant chat about many things.

In every way we were delighted with our stay at Lucerne. Beautiful for situation, a capital centre for tourists, while the charges are by no means exorbitant. In the town itself there are one or two objects of more than passing interest, first and foremost being the celebrated "Lion of Lucerne." Near the entrance to the "Glacier Garden" is a smooth cliff of rock, overshadowed by tall trees, and forming a delightfully shady and cool retreat. The place might have been a quarry once—I do not know. There is the smooth cliff to-day, fifty feet high, I should say, and about the same in width, and around its base is a semicircular pool, protected by a wooden rail, so that the ambitious Britisher or American has no chance of immortalising himself by cutting his own initials in the sandstone rock. Now it is in the centre of this cliff, "in the living strata," to quote the words of Ruskin, "is sculptured the colossal figure of a dying lion. A spear is broken off in his side, but in his last struggle he still defends a shield marked with the *fleur-de-lis* of France. Below are inscribed in red letters, as if charactered in blood ,the names of the brave officers of the Swiss

Guards who were slain for their unshaken fidelity to the unhappy Louis XVI. From many a crevice in the rock drip down trickling springs, forming a pellucid basin below, whose dark, glossy surface, encircled with trees and shrubs, reflects the image."

I may add that the figure of the lion is twenty-eight feet in length, and was hewn from a model by the celebrated Danish sculptor, Thorwaldsen. To say that the work is extremely impressive and full of indescribable pathos is only to say what every one else has said; and yet what else is left to say? I would not have missed seeing that lion on any account, nor do I recollect ever seeing a piece of sculpture that moved me so much; and no man, I think, with any heart in him, can look at the suffering, pathetic face of the dying brute without emotion. I meant to have brought away a picture of this celebrated monument, but I could not find one that suited me. Even the photographs, for some unaccountable reason, failed to catch the expression of the face, while the wooden models, of which there were hundreds for sale, were most of them execrable. Next in interest to the "Lion," I place the old wooden bridges, two in number, that span the Reuss. Anything more quaint than those old covered ways it would be difficult to imagine. In the triangular spaces formed by the

beams that support the roof, pictures have been painted, for the edification and amusement, I presume, of those who cared to loiter on the way. The first of these bridges is decorated with one hundred and fifty-four paintings, representing, according to Ruskin, all the important Swiss battles and victories. But for the second bridge a more ghastly subject was selected for illustration—viz., "The Dance of Death." And yet, notwithstanding its subject, the second series of paintings is the more interesting of the two. By the time you have looked at thirty or forty of the pictures, you become intensely curious to know what further illustration the artist can possibly find for his subject; and so you are irresistibly drawn on to the end, notwithstanding your neck aches fit to break before you have got half-way across.

We did not ascend Pilatus, whose dark caverns are still haunted by the restless spirit of Pontius Pilate, as the legend avers; and who shall doubt? Consequently we did not see the cave in which he once dwelt, after he had been driven by remorse from Galilee, nor the little lake in the Bründelen Alp, where in his despair he drowned himself. We anticipated plenty of climbing in the days to come, so we reserved our strength until we got amongst the snow mountains.

In the meanwhile, however, we got all the informa-

tion we could as to routes, guides, baggage, etc.: purchased alpenstocks for ourselves and wives; got the soles of our shoes decorated with sharp-headed nails; and prepared ourselves generally to attack the monsters of the Oberland, provided they gave us the chance. We had as yet not the remotest idea what mountain climbing meant, but we had no doubt we could manage it if we made up our minds to it. We found out afterwards that the difficulty was not in making up the mind, but in making up the body. However, that did not trouble us at present. We were in high spirits, and felt courageous enough for anything in reason.

The last day of our stay was a very pleasant one, and we should have left it with greater reluctance than we did, but for the promise we made to ourselves that some time in the future, if all went well, we would visit it again. In the cool of the evening we sauntered up and down the promenade, under the shadow of the long lines of chestnut trees, and watched the displays of fireworks in front of the hotels, or listened to the bands discoursing sweet music. All Lucerne seems to muster on the promenade in the evenigns, and a gay and lively scene it is.

When the last rocket, however, had burst far above us in a brilliant shower of gold, and all the bonfires

on the hills had died out in the darkness, we retired to our rooms, to dream of glaciers and crevasses, of landslips and avalanches, and a dozen other wonders and perils that we had heard of, but never seen.

## CHAPTER IX.

### THE ST. GOTHARD PASS

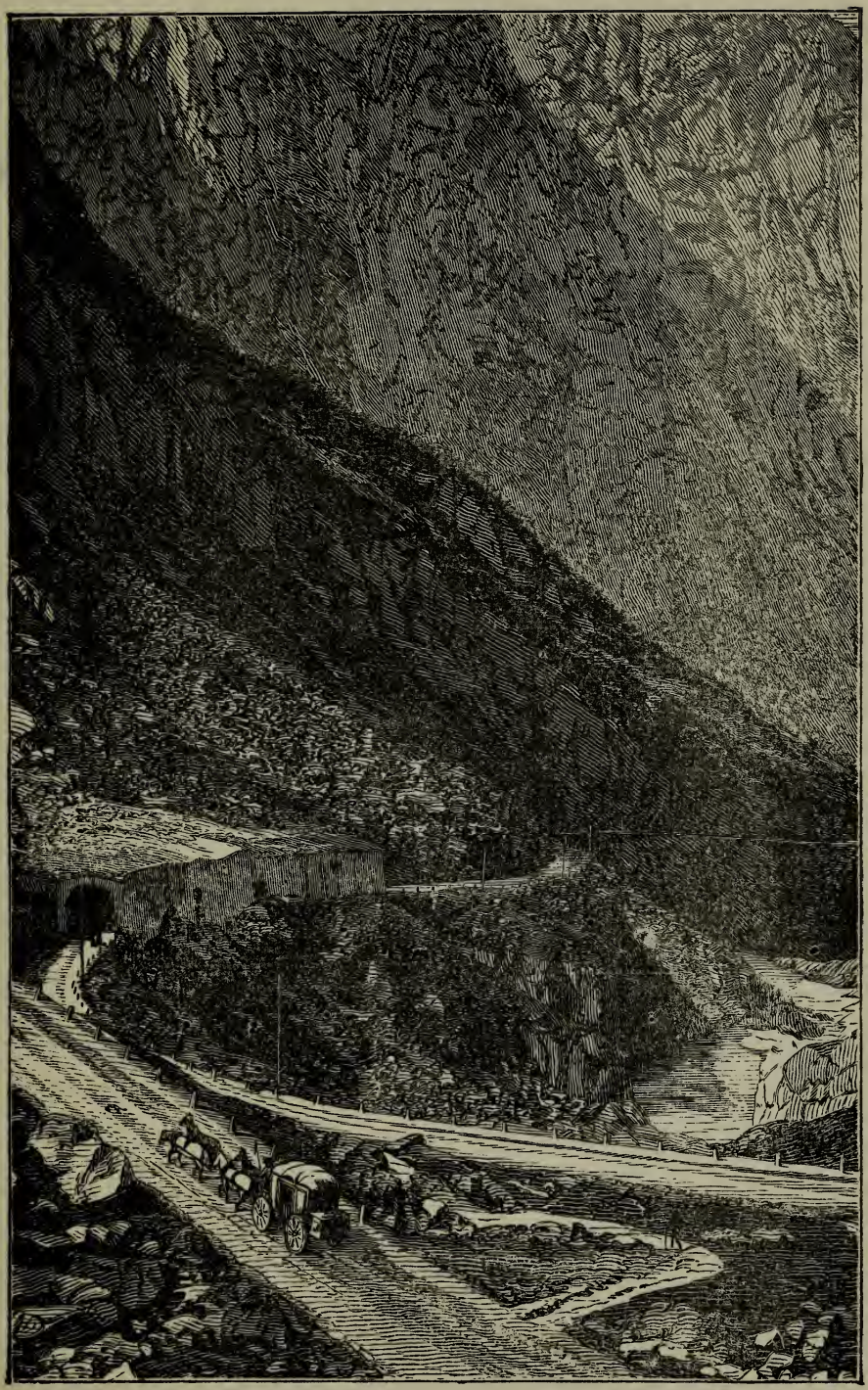
NEXT morning we were stirring early; and after a substantial breakfast we embarked once more on the lake steamer *en route* for Flüelen. The weather was not very promising. If Pilatus was not actually wielding his sword, he wore his collar very low down, and even the summit of the Rigi was wreathed in heavy folds of cloud. This was not very encouraging. Still we were not to be deterred by a shower of rain. We had been given to understand before we left home that there was frequently a good deal of "weather" knocking about in Switzerland, and so had provided ourselves with "waterproofs" in anticipation. We need not have been anxions, however. The rain we encountered at home was a hundred times worse than anything we experienced while away. In this respect I think "Old England" will bear off the palm from all the rest of the world. If there is a wetter country anywhere on the surface of the globe, I don't want to

see it; and I am quite satisfied that if people can get about in England they can get about anywhere as far as weather is concerned. Day after day our letters from home contained the same tidings. "Weather dreadful." "Weather awful." "Weather most depressing." "Nothing but rain since you left." While we had scarcely occasion to open our umbrellas all the time we were away.

Flüelen stands at the extreme south end of the lake, and about twenty-three miles from Lucerne. The journey took us about two hours and a half, as well as I remember, and a most delightful sail it was, notwithstanding it threatened rain nearly all the time. On the whole we were rather pleased at a cloud-draped sky, for a change is pleasant sometimes, even though it be no improvement. The trailing folds of mist produced some wonderful effects on the mountain slopes. Every now and then some dark curtain of vapour would vanish as if by magic, and reveal to us a well-wooded and picturesque glen cut deep into the mountain-side, the existence of which we had no conception of a moment before; and anon a rift in the clouds high overhead would disclose to our view some bold promontory or snowy crest far away in the distance; then down would sweep the clouds again, and all the fair prospects would be shut out from our

view. And so the peaks, and promontories, and glens seemed playing hide-and-seek all the while, teasing us sometimes with only partial glimpses of what we wanted to see in perfection, but on the whole giving us infinite pleasure and delight.

When we had traversed about three-quarters of the distance between Lucerne and Flüelen, we discovered that the lake took a sudden bend to the south, while the character of the scenery changed at once. No longer green and wooded slopes, fringing all the margin of the lake, but rocky mountains rising almost perpendicularly out of the water. This arm of the lake is known as the "Lake of Uri," and is intimately associated with the exploits of William Tell. Near the angle caused by the sudden bend in the lake rises a pyramid of rock eighty feet high, on which (in huge iron letters) we could easily read the name SCHILLER. A little farther on the three springs of Rütli were pointed out to us, and the romantic plateau known as the Rütli fields, where, on the memorable night of the 7th of November, 1307, the famous thirty-three met and bound themselves by an oath that they would be faithful to each other and never rest until they had freed their country from the terrible tyranny under which it groaned. And now the romantic "Tell's Chapel" comes into sight, rebuilt as recently as 1880,



THE GREAT CARRIAGE-WAY ON THE PASS OF ST. GOTHARD.

but originally erected by Canton Uri on the spot where the Swiss liberator sprang out of Gessler's boat.

At this point of our route, also, we were brought face to face with some fine examples of engineering skill. As I have before intimated, the shores of Lake Uri are perpendicular walls of rock, and yet all along the eastern shore is carried a roadway known as the "Axenstrasse." This carriage-way is cut into the face of the cliff, stout pillars being left at regular intervals to support the roof; while directly below, and running parallel with it, is the new St. Gothard Railway, excavated after the same fashion.

At Flüelen—without having regard to geographical niceties—the great St. Gothard Pass may be said to commence. It may best be described as a valley rising gradually between lofty mountains; now widening out into pleasant pastures and wooded slopes, and now contracting to the narrowest defiles, with perpendicular walls of rock rising on either side. Pursuing this valley for thirty miles, you reach the top of the pass, six thousand nine hundred and thirty-six feet above the level of the sea. Then commences the descent on the Italian side. No part of the route is without interest, while in many places the scenery is grand beyond description, gradually becoming more wild and awe-inspiring as you ascend to higher levels,

till at the "Devil's Bridge" it culminates in one of the weirdest, wildest defiles the world can produce.

It had been our intention to hire a conveyance at Flüelen and drive to Hospenthal, but finding that we could travel as far as Göschenen by the new St. Gothard Railway, we adopted the latter course. For the first dozen miles we seemed to be travelling through a perfectly level valley, so gradual was the ascent. But as the valley narrowed it got more and more steep, and our progress correspondingly slow.

I may as well confess, also, that after awhile we got considerably bewildered, for, in order to carry the railway up the steep ascent, the mountains have been pierced by a number of circular tunnels; hence our bewilderment may be imagined when, on emerging from the first of these, we found ourselves in just the same place we were before we entered it, except that we were a few hundred feet nearer the clouds. We took in the situation, however, after a while, and began to wonder what other freaks were to be played upon us.

Just beyond Wassen we crossed—by a splendid iron bridge—a foaming cataract that had cut for itself a deep gorge in the side of the mountain. A little way beyond the bridge we entered a tunnel, and after wandering about in the darkness for an unconscionably long time, we came out, as we supposed, on the other

side of the mountain, and very soon were crossing another gorge very similar to the one just alluded to. A second look, however, convinced us that there was a mistake somewhere, and we soon discovered that we were crossing the same torrent, but by another bridge a hundred or more feet above the first one. We had in fact described a perfect circle inside the mountain, and were now retracing our steps towards Flüelen, except that Flüelen was *down* the hill, and we were steadily climbing up all the while. Still on we went in this backward direction for I don't know how far, and then entered another tunnel, and began twisting about as before, and emerged at length high above where we entered. Now we have our faces towards Italy once more, and very soon we are crossing the cataract by a third bridge far above the other two. From this point the view is magnificent. Below us are the two bridges that we have already crossed, with the foaming torrent rushing on to the Reuss that is far below both. During all this time we have been making no progress in the direction we wanted to go. Yet the end sought has been accomplished. If we have not been making "distance," we have been making "height." For the last hour we have been steadily nearing the clouds, and are already three thousand feet above the level of the sea. Another climb of a couple

of miles, by which another five hundred feet in height are gained, and we pull up at Göschenen, a little station that stands just at the entrance of the great St. Gothard Tunnel.

I can understand now how this railway has cost forty thousand pounds a mile. I do not wonder now, after travelling over a good part of it, that it cost so much; I only wonder that it cost so little. Indeed, I wonder that it was ever attempted, or, having been attempted, that it was ever accomplished. Certainly it is a fine illustration of what can be wrought by steady perseverance. And I could not help thinking that if there were half the amount of enterprise in the "Christian world" that there is in the "commercial," long ere this every mountain of ignorance would be tunnelled through, and across every chasm of heathenism and superstition would be thrown a bridge of truth, and in the mountain fastnesses of darkness and sin would be made "a highway for our God."

It was not our purpose to go through the long tunnel into Italy, so we avoided the nine and a half miles of darkness by getting out at Göschenen and proceeding up the St. Gothard Pass by diligence. At least we put our luggage into the diligence, and got in ourselves when we felt disposed. As we were now entering the sombre rocky defile of the Schöllenen,

the wildest and most desolate part of the St. Gothard Pass, we preferred to walk all we could, so that we might enjoy the scenery—that is, if it is possible to *enjoy* anything so wild, and weird, and solemn. The defile is about two and a half miles long, bounded by lofty and almost perpendicular walls of granite, at the base of which dashes the impetuous Reuss. The carriage-road ascends by numerous windings, most of which, by aid of our alpenstocks, we cut off by taking the bridle paths. The farther we penetrated into this defile the narrower and gloomier it got. Overhead the clouds hung low, shutting out the snow peaks that towered high above us, and from which occasional avalanches fell with a roar that no words can describe; while below us roared and foamed the river as it went leaping over endless cataracts in its wild and impetuous haste.

Still narrower the defile got, till there was only room for the river's bed, and consequently the road had to be cut into the solid face of the cliff after the fashion of the Axenstrasse already alluded to. This arrangement served also as a protection from the avalanches, which fall most frequently in this part of the pass.

At length we reached the *Teufelsbrücke* (Devil's Bridge), in the midst of a scene of the wildest desolation, by which we crossed—at a height of a hundred

feet above the river—to the other side of the defile. I could not but think that "Devil's Bridge" was a very appropriate name. The awful desolation of the place, the awe-inspiring grandeur of the cliffs, the hoarse roar of the river as it leaped over a precipice of a hundred feet just above the bridge, and bedewed it with a constant shower of spray, and the wild shrieking of the wind,—aptly called by the natives "Hutschelm," or "hat rogue,"—all combined to render this defile one of the most eerie, "creepy," and awe-inspiring places it has been my lot to visit.

Standing on the bridge, we could see, twenty feet below us, the remains of an older and much narrower bridge, where, in the year 1799, a battle was fought between the French and Austrians, and the latter, unable to withstand the impetuous attack of the French, blew up the bridge, and precipitated hundreds of soldiers into the seething abyss below.

We did not remain long on the bridge. The place was altogether too "creepy." Moreover, we were glad to seek the shelter of the diligence from the wild, searching wind that swept down the pass. To all appearance, however, we were now completely hemmed in on every side, except the way we had come. Right across the defile rose an almost perpendicular cliff, in which was the narrowest possible gorge, where the

river had cut its way through. To climb this cliff seemed impossible; and yet prior to 1707 this was done by means of wooden galleries; while a chain bridge conducted the traveller through this narrow rift in a constant shower of spray.

Now, however, this perilous adventure is avoided by a tunnel seventy yards long, and broad enough to admit two carriages abreast. Through this tunnel we drove at a rattling pace, and no sooner were we clear out of it than a simultaneous "Oh!" burst from every lip. Could it be possible? We rubbed our eyes to make sure we were not being imposed upon. But there was no deception about it. We were in a green pleasant valley nearly five thousand feet above the level of the sea, with the summer's sunshine streaming down upon us, and cattle grazing contentedly in the meadows, and children playing by the roadside ahead of us. On every side rose lofty mountains partially covered with snow, while through the centre of the valley glided the Reuss as gently as any one could desire. Such a sudden transformation I had never seen before. One minute in that awful and desolate defile, chilled to the bone by the wild wind that shrieked around us, and almost appalled by the roar of the river and the deep solemnity of the place; the next minute out in the sunshine, in the midst

of fields of living green, and with signs of life and beauty on every hand.

Ah me! ah me! I pray it may be so at the last. When our eyes shall fail, and earth shall fade in the darkness of death—when our spirits sink at the roar of the river, and our hearts grow still in the chill of night,—may we find on the other shore the light of an endless day, and the beauty that shall never fade.

This green valley of Urseren was probably a lake before the river fretted its narrow channel through the Schöllenen. Now, however, it finds a precarious livelihood for some fourteen hundred people, earned chiefly by feeding cattle and conveying travellers and goods across the St. Gothard. Winter lasts nearly eight months in this high region, and fires are often needed through nearly all the short summer.

We reached Hospenthal early in the afternoon, and having secured rooms at the Hotel Meyerhof, we started on a tramp up the St. Gothard Pass, our object being to reach the top of the pass and have a peep down into Italy. Leaving the green valley of Urseren, we turned to the left and ascended by a steep path through a desolate valley, which grew more and more desolate as we rose to higher altitudes; the only beautiful things we could find in these wild regions

being an occasional wild flower, and some excellent specimens of the Alpine rose, which we gathered close up to the snow-line.

I may as well say first as last that we saw nothing of Italy. By the time we had reached a height of about six thousand feet we were all among the clouds. Fortunately for us the road was good, so that there was never any danger of our missing our way.

On our return journey, and when within a mile or so of Hospenthal, we were greatly amused by a number of men and women on the mountain-sides milking their cows and goats. What there was for the poor cattle to eat I could not see, and how they managed to reach the heights they did was to me a standing wonder. However, they *did* manage it. On all sorts of dizzy heights we saw them perched, and looking as unconcerned as if they were on level ground. Now it will be seen in a moment that to reach these cattle with milking-stool and bucket must be a work of no small difficulty. Necessity, however, is the mother of invention, and the Swiss are an ingenious folk, and so they have arranged a wooden bucket with a sliding cover to fit comfortably on the back, and kept in its place by leathern straps carried over the shoulders. By means of leathern straps also the milking-stool is attached—well, where it will

prove most convenient. Now as this stool has only one leg, fixed in the centre, the milkers, when walking about, present, to say the least, a somewhat comical appearance. On first catching sight of these people, I felt as though I was on the eve of a great scientific discovery, and, turning to my wife, I said (with too much haste, as I now see), "Darwin's missing link at last." I was soon undeceived, however,—as scientific men often are who jump to hasty conclusions (a common fault of many of them), but who will not always own to it as readily as I have done,—and when I had recovered from the fit of laughter excited by the sight of these men and women climbing hither and thither with their short, stumpy tails stuck straight out, I drew nearer that I might have a better look at this ingenious contrivance. That it *was* an ingenious contrivance it was impossible to deny. Both hands were left free to use their alpenstock, and when they wanted to sit down—well, they sat down, and always found the stool in its proper place. To farmers who want something in this line—that is, at once picturesque and useful—I should most certainly recommend the Swiss milking-stool.

It was getting dusk and chilly when we returned to our hotel, and we were thankful for a piping hot dinner and a cup of warm tea after. We did not

remain up late, for we had decided to be stirring early next morning, for a long day was before us, and a toilsome one. Moreover, we were pretty well tired with the exertions of the day, and sleepy too, thanks to the fresh mountain air. Underneath our window rippled the Reuss over its stony bed, and with its gentle, soothing music in our ears we fell asleep.

## CHAPTER X.

### OVER THE FURKA PASS.

I COULD scarcely repress an exclamation of surprise and pleasure when I threw back the window-shutter next morning and looked out; for lo! all the clouds of the previous day had vanished, and the little valley of Urseren lay steeped in brilliant sunshine, while the snow mountains, that seemed only a stone's-throw away, stood out against the deep blue of the sky with such dazzling whiteness as can only be realised by those who have seen them. Such a picture once seen can never be forgotten. It is a new experience in life, and one that will remain separate and distinct from every other to the last. Though we had now been in Switzerland a week, we had not yet got over the strangeness of those snow mountains encircling us on every side. There seemed something unearthly in the white, cold lonesomeness of these lofty peaks piercing the sky so far above us.

Here at Hospenthal we were in the very heart of the

Alpine range, and within a couple of thousand feet of the line of everlasting snow. On every side we were encircled by mountains, on which lay a thick mantle of white, smoothing out many of the irregularities, and gently rounding the sharp pinnacles and promontories.

As yet, however, we had only seen the snow at a distance; but to-day, if all went well, we should reach by noon the frozen fields, and feel the crunching of the white carpet beneath our feet. How pleased we were to have a fine day for our expedition can be easily imagined, and we were determined to make the most of it.

Our programme was to reach the top of the Furka Pass as early as possible, then climb the Galenstock, —or as much of it as we dared,—descend by the Rhone Glacier into the Upper Valais, and then, if not too late, ascend the Grimsel, and down the other side to the Grimsel Hospice, where we purposed spending the night.

To accomplish this we had to be stirring early. We had hired our guide and driver the previous night, and scarcely had we finished breakfast when he drove up to the door, with three small horses harnessed to a primitive-looking chaise, and signified by a great flourish of his long whip that he was quite ready for the start.

We were not long in taking our seats, and with a

crack of the whip and a merry jingling of the strings of bells around the horses' necks, away we started. For a mile or two the way was level, and the road straight as a rule. In the meadows on either side, early as it was, men and women were busy making hay. They gave us a salute as we passed, and then went steadily on with their work. It seemed curious to see people sweltering in the fields with great plains of frozen snow all around them.

It did not take us long to reach the end of the valley, and then commenced the ascent. Our driver quietly fixed his whip in the rest, fastened the reins to the splash-board, and dismounted. J—— and I followed his example, and, taking our alpenstocks, made for a bee-line up the mountain-side; by this means we avoided many of the almost endless zigzags of the carriage-road. It was hard work climbing, however, and every now and then we were glad to sit down and rest. But after a steady pull of something over four hours, we reached the top of the pass, eight thousand feet above the sea-level. Here, notwithstanding the bright sunshine and the intense heat, large masses of snow lay all along the roadside, slowly melting into clear streams that were trickling down the mountain-sides in all directions.

Once in the snow region, we could not resist the

temptation of having a game at "snow-balling," but we soon gave it up; the intense cold made our arms ache to the shoulders.

After a short rest we commenced to climb the Galenstock; but I may as well say at once we did not reach the summit, which is 11,805 feet high. It was very fatiguing, also, climbing the snowy steeps, with the loose crystals crunching under our feet, nor was the undertaking without considerable risk. It is easy enough to read descriptions of Alpine climbing, but no description can give any idea of what it means. Only those who have traversed the snow-fields, looked down into the horrible crevasses, and scaled the steep cones by the aid of the ice-axe, can have any conception of its difficulty and danger. Speaking candidly from the very trifling experience I have had, I do not think "the game is worth the candle."

The view we got from the height we reached (about ten thousand feet) was certainly very grand, the whole Bernese Alps coming into view, as well as the beautiful cone of Monte Rosa. But the most difficult part of the ascent we did not attempt: the sight of it was quite sufficient for us, and we did not think it worth while to risk our necks for the sake of saying we had been to the top.

While we were climbing our horses were resting;

for on the Furka Pass is a wooden hotel, where the wants of both man and beast are attended to. After our descent we got a most welcome though expensive lunch at this hotel. But, seeing the pass is snowed up ten months out of the twelve, we could hardly grumble at the proprietor of the hotel making the most of his brief harvest.

Now came the descent of twenty-two hundred feet into the Rhone Valley, and I must confess it looked an appalling undertaking: the mountain-side is very steep, with the road cut in its face in long zigzags, the angles being so acute that it seemed almost impossible that a conveyance could turn them without upsetting. Our guide, however, seemed quite insensible to danger. Mounting the box, he gathered up the reins in his left hand, put his foot firmly on the brake, took the whip in his right hand, and with an enormous flourish and a mighty crack away sprang the horses and away went we. It was in vain that we expostulated.

"It is all right, Monsieur," he called back; "we'll be down in forty minutes." And I quite thought that he spoke the truth; indeed, I expected we should get down in much less time than that. We had been four hours coming up, and to attempt to descend the other side in forty minutes seemed madness. If he had chained the wheels and walked by the side of the horses, it

would have seemed sensible; but Fritz didn't believe in walking when he could ride; so when we expostulated he only cracked his whip the louder, and down we rolled, turning the sharp curves with such a sudden lurch that the carriage had not time to overturn. Of all the rides I have had, I think that was most exciting. Finding that Fritz was not to be moved, we sat still, held our breath, and hoped for the best. Fritz sat still, also, never once turning his head during all the perilous descent. He evidently knew what he was about. Firmly he held the reins, firmly he pressed the brake, and steadily he kept his eye on the leader. Fortunately for us, our previous "climbs" and "descents," coupled with the pure, bracing air of these high regions, had already braced our nerves and steadied our heads, so that we were able to look over the side of the carriage down the sheer precipices of five hundred or more feet without feeling the least giddy, and even to admire the great Rhone Glacier, by whose side we descended nearly all the distance. So down we trotted to the music of the horses' bells and the crack of Fritz's whip, and in sight of some of the most imposing scenery of the world. It was a magnificent ride; and when at length from the bottom we looked up at the perilous way we had come, we felt not a little elated that we had accomplished it in such splendid form.

The carriage-way for us ended here. Over the Grimsel to the Hospice there is only a bridle-path; and so while Fritz was engaged in baiting the horses, and saddling the two most sure-footed of them, we had time to examine the great Rhone Glacier, one of the largest glaciers in Switzerland. To describe a glacier is not easy. Let the reader imagine a great river of compressed snow, from a quarter of a mile to a mile and a half wide, commencing far up among the mountains, and when it reaches the edge of a precipice, instead of breaking off, it simply rolls down as dough might, and pushes its foot far out into the lower valleys, where it slowly melts away. This great river of snow may be a hundred or five hundred or a thousand feet deep, and is ever on the move from end to end, sliding downward at the rate of about five hundred feet a year. The Rhone Glacier may be about a quarter of a mile wide, six or seven hundred feet deep, and how many miles long I don't know. As it has to descend a precipice of a thousand feet, its surface is cracked and gashed in the most frightful manner, some of the cracks, or *crevasses* as they are called, being at least a hundred feet wide, and some so narrow that you can easily step across them.

In getting upon the Rhone Glacier, we found that locomotion was far from easy. Great icicles or ice-

boulders confronted us every now and then twenty and thirty feet in height; these often stood on the edge of the crevasses, and sometimes toppled over and fell into them with a noise that was appalling. In some places the crevasses are so close together that the narrow ridge between them scarcely affords standing room, while the knowledge that a false step may precipitate you into eternity is rather trying to the nerves. Into one of the shallower cracks, or ice-grottoes, we descended, and found it "like a fairy palace of sapphire; the walls of ice being of the loveliest and most vivid blue colour, radiating a soft bluey light throughout the whole place." The cold, however, was intense, and there was an unearthliness about the place that made us eager to get out again as soon as possible.

In these crevasses accidents have been very numerous. Scarcely a year passes but one or other of them forms the grave of some hapless traveller or mountaineer. Towards the end of the last century the innkeeper of Grindelwald fell into a deep crevasse in the upper glacier, which flows into that beautiful valley. Happily he fell gradually from ledge to ledge, and so reached the bottom not seriously hurt, though in a state of insensibility. When he awoke from his stupor, he found himself in an ice-cavern with a stream flowing through an arch at its extremity. Following the

course of this stream along a narrow tunnel, which was in some places so low in the roof that he could scarcely squeeze himself through on his hands and knees, he came out at last at the foot of the glacier into the open air. Not so fortunate, however, was a priest of the same district. Being an enthusiastic student of natural history, he set out one day with a guide to explore the higher regions of the same glacier. Late in the evening the guide returned alone, asserting that the priest had fallen into a crevasse. Suspicion being excited that the guide had murdered him for the sake of money and valuables which he carried about him, a diligent search was made for him, extending over twelve days. At last they came to an awful chasm, which the guide identified as the scene of the tragedy. A man was let down by a rope with a lighted lantern round his neck, and twice was he drawn up in a state of exhaustion, but the third time he returned with the corpse in his arms. It was horribly mangled, but the property was safe.

In the year 1860 a Russian gentleman fell into a deep chasm in the St. Théodule Glacier. As his guides looked over the edge, they saw him far below wedged in between two walls of ice, "with his head down, waving his right arm, which was free, for help." They let down their rope, but it was not long enough to reach

him. One guide ran to the nearest habitation many miles off, to get a longer one, while the other remained beside the spot. "Pray for me, I need your prayers," came in a faint voice from the depths. For five terrible hours, that seemed as long as centuries, the poor prisoner's hand was seen rising and falling in dumb, piteous entreaty. Slower and feebler grew the motion; and at last the arm fell down for ever in the stillness of death. When the guide came with the rope all was over; he called again and again, but no voice replied. The man was dead.

As helping to prove the rate at which the glaciers move, a remarkable incident occurred in 1820. Three of the guides who accompained Dr. Hamel, of St. Petersburg, in his ascent of Mont Blanc, were swept away by an avalanche into a crevasse in the upper portion of the Glacier de Bossons. Taking five hundred feet a year as the rate the glacier was moving, Dr. Hamel calculated that the unfortunate guides would be disentombed in about forty years. This calculation proved to be correct. In the year 1861, forty-one years after their entombment, traces of them were found in the shape of a knapsack, lantern, two skulls, and portions of human limbs, to which particles of flesh still adhered, on the surface of the lower levels of the glacier.

## CHAPTER XI.

### THE GRIMSEL AND AARE VALLEY.

On getting back to the hotel, we found that Fritz had two of the horses saddled, ready to take our wives over the Grimsel. The ascent is not great, being only about fifteen hundred feet, but it is much steeper than Snowdon on the Capel Curig side. Riding a horse upstairs is nothing to it; and, indeed, such a ride looks almost as easy for the horse as for the rider. Fortunately the saddles are like arm-chairs, so that we were not at all apprehensive that our wives would fall off. Our only concern was lest the horses should fail to reach the summit in safety. However, these sagacious animals knew quite as much about mountain climbing as we did, and, indeed, a great deal more; and the manner in which they toiled steadily up the steeps, pausing every now and then when they were out of breath, was quite an interesting study. J—— and I panted hard behind, and rested much oftener than the horses; for the afternoon was intensely hot, and we were

on the lee side of the mountain, with the westering sun beating full on our backs. Yet there is a sense of buoyancy and exhilaration in reaching those high altitudes that more than compensates for all the fatigue.

At length the summit is reached, to our intense relief, and once more we feel the snow crunching beneath our feet, and the grateful wind upon our brows blowing fresh and cool from off the fields of snow. And what a scene opens up before us again! How unspeakably grand the mountains look in the light of the sinking sun. In front of us and to the right the Bernese Oberland, and to the left Monte Rosa and the Italian Alps, all aglow in the amber light.

For some distance our way lay along the ridge of the mountain, and here I could not help being struck with the sagacity of the horses. In many places the snow was treacherous; streams flowing underneath had hollowed out small caverns, the roofs of which sometimes collapsed, to the imminent danger of horse and rider. But our horses were not to be caught napping. The manner in which they would put out their fore feet, especially if the ground was steep, and feel around, until they had discovered a safe footing, was almost laughable.

Moving slowly along the ridge of the mountain, we reached at length a small lake—*Todensee;* lake of the

THE GRIMSEL PASS.

dead. So called from the fact that in the summer of 1799, after a battle between the French and Austrians, it was used as a burial-place. The water was beautifully clear, but so cold that we could hardy bear to wash our hands in it.

And now came the descent on the Grimsel side, which at first looked a rather formidable undertaking, as the side of the mountain is scraped quite clean of earth by glacial action, and many of the rocks scoured perfectly smooth. With much labour, however, a narrow bridle-path has been constructed on the rocky face of the mountain, by which we descended in single file, the horses—carrying our baggage only—bringing up the rear.

We now found ourselves in a deep, desolate basin of rock, six thousand one hundred and forty-eight feet above the sea-level. On every side rose lofty mountains destitute of all verdure, and with nothing to relieve the monotony of dark grey rock but the snow patches lying in all the crevices. At the bottom of this basin is a small lake, so cold that no fish can live in it; and on the margin of the lake stands the Hospice, a long, rambling house with thick walls roughly built of unhewn stone—erected originally as a refuge for poor travellers crossing the Grimsel, but now crowded with tourists during the summer, for the very sufficient

reason that there is no other house within many hour's walk.

Here, then, in this desolate hollow up among the Alps, we were to spend the night, with the black waters of the lake sobbing mournfully on its strand of rock, and the chill night wind wailing around the low Hospice, as though the place were haunted by evil spirits. Certainly the prospect was not inviting; but there were plenty of travellers besides ourselves, so that we were not likely to be short of company.

As soon as the sun disappeared behind the tall mountains, the evening grew chilly at once, and we, tired with our day's journey, were glad to betake ourselves early to bed. But to find sleep was not so easy. The floors being uncarpeted, and the rooms being separated by the thinnest of wooden partitions, a footfall in any part of the building could be heard all over the Hospice. Sleep did come, however, at length, deep, dreamless, and refreshing, and when we woke again the room was full of the rosy light of early morning.

All the travellers were early astir, and by six o'clock our wives were again in the saddle, and we were on the march. The morning was gloriously fine, not a cloud flecked the deep blue of the sky, while the breeze was delightfully cool, coming to us as it did from off the fields of snow. The gloomy, sombre look of the moun-

tains had vanished with the morning light, and they looked simply magnificent in their white hoods of snow. The scene in front of the Hospice was quite an animated one. The morning being so fine, everybody wanted to be starting early, those who were footing it being generally the first to get away; and with a wave of their hats or a flourish of their alpenstocks they bade us *bon jour* and departed. When horses had to be saddled and baggage adjusted, there was a little more delay in starting; but we were off at length, and were soon out of sight of the Grimsel in the steep and intricate windings of the Aare Valley.

Our destination was Meiringen, a good nine hours' tramp; but we anticipated no difficulty, as there were no mountains to climb. In this, however, we had reckoned without our host. Give me a good climb up a mountain in preference to walking along the face of a cliff by the narrowest bridle-path, with a perpendicular wall of rock on the one hand and a dizzy precipice on the other, at the foot of which the river foams and roars in its impetuous rush down the defile.

To speak of a journey down a valley along the banks of a river is generally to convey the impression of an easy and pleasant stroll. But the Swiss valley of the Aare bears no resemblance to our English valleys: "defile" or "cañon" would be a better name for

many parts of it. For the first three hours after leaving the Grimsel, barren and sometimes perpendicular walls of rock rose on either side of us, and came so close together that the river-bed occupied the entire width of the valley. The bridle-path of course had to be cut in many instances in the face of the rock, now on a level with the foaming torrent, and now ascending by a break-neck path over a spur of rock that threatens to block our way altogether. Now carefully rounding a promontory, where a false step means an unbroken fall of a hundred and fifty feet, and now descending by precipitous zigzags to the level of the river once more. All this of course is easy enough if you have a steady head, nor need any danger be apprehended; but to ride a horse round these promontories and down these zigzags requires, not only considerable nerve, but unbounded confidence in the beast.

We had great confidence in our horses, for their sagacity had already been put to the test, though occasionally I felt a bit annoyed that they would persist in keeping as near the outer edge of the path as they possibly could. Our guide explained this by saying that the ladies' feet were on the inner side, and it was very necessary they should not catch in the rock.

That we had to move along this path in single file

goes without saying. E——'s horse took the lead, and I followed as close behind as possible; then came L—— on her horse, followed by J——; while Fritz brought up the rear. We had ascended at least a hundred feet above the river, and were rounding one of the sharpest and most treacherous-looking promontories we had yet come to, when E——'s horse came to a sudden halt. It was not a pleasant place, certainly, to encounter any delay, on the one side being a perpendicular cliff, and on the other an overhanging precipice, while the path was so narrow that two people would have great difficulty in passing abreast. Instantly I rushed forward to ascertain the cause of the delay; for the horse, having reached the extreme point of the promontory, could see what was on the other side, which I was unable to do. Getting close to the horse's heels, however, I saw the difficulty, and for a moment my heart seemed to leap into my mouth. A flock of full-grown pigs blocked the path nearly as far as I could see. What was to be done? A question more easily asked than answered just then. For the horse to turn round was simply impossible, and to attempt to back out would be an exceedingly risky business. The pigs were not disposed to turn round. They evidently had too great regard for their necks to attempt it, and to back out was clearly no part of their programme. For myself, I felt

perfectly helpless, and could only hope that the horse would not turn restive; for in that case almost certain destruction would be the result, and neither horse nor rider would probably be ever seen again.

"What's up?" called some one behind, and without turning my head I shouted, "Pigs!" I was too excited to attempt any explanation, and too eager to learn the result of this strange adventure.

Fortunately the horse was not so excited as I was. With great deliberation he bent down his nose and smelt at the foremost of the herd; that proving to his satisfaction, he cautiously and deliberately stretched his legs as wide apart as possible, and the pigs marched between them in single file; and when the last had disappeared, he gathered up his legs again, and walked steadily on as though nothing had happened.

I felt great respect for that horse ever after that, and was disposed to be less anxious after such a display of sagacity. After a march of three hours, we reached Handeck, a village that consists of one châlet and a cow-shed. Here we got some goats' milk to drink, which we found very refreshing; and then leaving our horses to do a little grazing on their own account, we went to visit the celebrated Handeck waterfall, reckoned the finest in Switzerland. We had seen several beautiful "falls" already, but nothing to be compared to this.

The whole volume of the Aare precipitates itself in an unbroken mass into an abyss two hundred and fifty feet in depth. Standing on a wooden bridge above the fall, the spectacle is sublime. From the deep gulf a cloud of vapour and spray rises incessantly, in which the most beautiful rainbows are formed by the sunshine, while the roar is equal to the loudest thunder.

In our three hours' tramp we had descended fifteen hundred feet, and in the next half-hour we descended five hundred feet more, through a forest of pines. This we found delightful after the rugged and treeless wilds through which we had come. After awhile the valley widened out, and green pasture-lands greeted our tired eyes. Here we halted in sheer delight, and stretched ourselves on the soft turf, and gave ourselves up to thorough-going enjoyment of the magnificent scenery that met our eye at every point.

About noon we reached Guttannen, a poor village, though the largest in the valley, and situated in a large basin. In all directions the fields were covered with heaps of stones, which had been brought down by mountain torrents, some meadows, indeed, being completely covered by the *débris*. How the villagers eked a living out of such meagre little farms is to me a mystery; while the life they lead must be monotonous in the extreme. There is no way into the village or

VALLEY OF MEIRINGEN.

out of it but by a bridle-path, and that is blocked by snow during many months of the year.

At a small inn we rested for an hour and a half and got lunch, and then marched forward again, across ravines filled with glacier snow, and over mountain torrents by bridges of the most primitive construction; but a spice of danger seemed to give zest to our tramp, and every mile of it yielded us some new beauty or pleasure.

At length, after a seven or eight hours' march, our bridle-path terminated in a carriage-road. Here we found an old chaise that had been left by some travellers going in the opposite direction, and into this Fritz soon yoked our two horses, and, mounting the box, he drove away at a rattling pace, glad of an opportunity of riding after walking so far.

The road was still on the banks of the Aare, that roared far below us; nor was there the smallest protection along the edge of the precipice. But Fritz was a good driver, and we had got used to abysses; so we rattled along gaily enough, passing through one or two short tunnels in order to escape the mountain torrents that swept over us into the deep gorge of the Aare.

A little before five o'clock we rattled into the picturesque little town of Meiringen, and drove at once to

the Hôtel du Sauvage, one of the cleanest and most delightful hotels we had seen.

Here in this beautiful valley we purposed resting awhile, for we were close to the falls of the Reichenbach, and within easy reach of the Lake of Brienz and the celebrated Giessbach falls—a series of seven cascades falling from rock to rock from a height of eleven hundred and forty-eight feet, and set in a frame of dark green pines.

Many people go into raptures over the illumination of the falls at night by means of Bengal lights. For my own part I did not care much for it, and thought it hardly worth the extra franc apiece charged in our hotel bill next morning. We were not in the disposition, however, to grumble at anything. So far Switzerland had treated us right royally, and the expense so far was as nothing to the pleasure we had received.

## CHAPTER XII.

### OVER THE GREAT SCHEIDECK.

Our next long tramp was from Meiringen to Grindelwald over the Great Scheideck. As our wives, since their recent experiences, refused to trust themselves on horseback again, and expressed their determination to foot it all the way, we started about five o'clock in the morning, so that we might have plenty of time for the excursion. According to Baedeker, the journey should take seven and a half hours. But we calculated that in the case of ladies we might safely add two or three hours to that. Moreover, we did not intend to hurry through one of the finest passes in Switzerland at express speed. Our object was to see all we could, and to enjoy as much as possible what we saw.

Our luggage we forwarded to Interlaken by diligence, taking with us only such toilet requisites as we could not possibly do without. These, fastened securely with leather straps, we slung over our shoulders, and marched, taking, of course, our alpenstocks, which we found indispensable.

The morning was brilliantly fine—too fine almost. We should have been better pleased had there been a few clouds to temper the heat of the sun; but we expected to find it cooler as we ascended to higher regions, so we did not trouble ourselves much. The first two thousand feet of ascent we found rather trying, being much more steep than we anticipated. Baedeker allows two hours for this portion of the journey. We took four, and did not find the time any too much. On the top, and at the very edge of this acclivity, we found a small wooden hut, where we purchased some goats' milk, and rested for awhile. The view of Meiringen, right down at our feet, was very fine from this point. It seemed hardly credible that we had been four hours in getting to what only seemed a stone's-throw away; but distances looked at from great eminences are very deceptive, as we proved more than once.

We were now at the top, and overlooking the Reichenbach falls, which looked very beautiful with the morning sun shining into the gorge.

Our way now lay along the Reichenbach valley, the river during a good part of the distance being far below us; and on the other side of the river a perpendicular wall of rock rising to an enormous height. Passing a small wooden shanty, we were favoured with

some music on the Alpine horn—an instrument about eight feet long, made of wood or bark, and fitted with a brass mouthpiece. The music of the horn itself is not particularly sweet, nor is any tune attempted. A shrill blast of seven or eight notes—something like a bugle call—is given, and then a pause, while the echo takes up the strain, and repeats every note beautifully distinct, and then goes over them a second time, and even a third, getting fainter and more distant all the while. To me this echo was perfectly ravishing. It came upon me as a delightful surprise, and I gave the man a franc to go on with the music. All the "brassiness" (to coin a word) of the horn is left out in the echo. All the notes are accurately repeated, but the tones are infinitely more rich and sweet. And as they grow fainter and fainter among those mighty hills, one could almost imagine that far away on those pure white slopes that shine so dazzlingly bright against the sky, an angel was singing a fragment of some song of Paradise.

We stayed all too long listening to those wonderful echoes, and then continued our journey along the side of the valley. And a delightful journey it was. The ascent was by no means steep, the path was good, and shaded over by leafy trees. Wild flowers grew in abundance on all the banks and hillocks, and in the meadows that slanted steeply down to the river men

THE WELLHORN FROM ROSENIAUI. [*To face page 157.*

and women were busy at work making hay. Our only source of annoyance were the gad-flies. These long "grey-backs" would draw blood in a moment, if they were permitted to alight on hands or face. E—— took a most violent dislike to them, and every now and then we saw her spinning around in a kind of war dance, brandishing her alpenstock in a most frantic manner, and interjecting such expletives as, "Get away!" "Horrid thing!" "Be off with you!"

L—— said this was E——'s war-whoop, and suggested to her that she should speak to the flies in French or German, as they evidently did not understand English. E—— was not to be deterred, however, by L——'s chaff from continuing the slaughter whenever she had the opportunity, and so the war-dances continued at irregular intervals, until we reached the higher levels of the Reichenbach, and the cool air of the snow mountains dispersed the last of our tormentors.

At length the valley widened out into a perfectly level plateau, around the side of which the river rippled with the softest murmur imaginable. Crossing the river by a wooden bridge, we entered a green meadow, circular in shape, and almost as level as a bowling-green. Here on the soft turf we rested for a good half-hour, that we might enjoy one of the most beautiful—if not the *most* beautiful—pictures we had yet seen. The mea-

dow on every side was fringed with dark pine woods, rising gradually like an amphitheatre; and beyond the pine woods, and yet so close to us that we could see the crevices between the rocks, rose the Engelhörner, the Wellhorn, and the white cones of the Wetterhorn, forming one of the most imposing groups in the Oberland. Indeed, Baedeker says that with their beautiful foreground "they present a picture unsurpassed in Switzerland."

The first-named of this group is so steep that the snow will not remain upon it, and so it remains perfectly bare, frowning down upon the green fields at its base from a height of nine thousand feet. The Wellhorn, which is covered with a thick mantle of snow, rises to a height of ten thousand four hundred and eighty-six feet, and the Wetterhorn, with its triplet of cones, to twelve thousand one hundred and forty-nine feet. But no words can convey any idea of the exceeding grandeur and beauty of the picture, or of the rich harmony and soft blending of the colours it contained. At our feet was the emerald green of the meadows, shading into the deeper green of the pine woods that surrounded us. Above the pine woods the dark grey rocks of the mountains, above the rocks the slopes of dazzling snow, and above the snow the sky. To this add the Rosenlani Glacier,—between the Wellhorn and

THE WETTERHORN. [*To face page 159.*

the Englehörner,—shining like glass in the brilliant sunshine; the picturesque châlets standing in the shelter of the pine woods, and the herds of cattle grazing in the fields. Nor should I leave out the soft ripple of the river as it glided gently past, nor the pleasant music of the cow-bells that floated down from the pine-clad slopes above us. A scene, indeed, that steeped every sense in delicious pleasure, and filled the soul with adoration and awe.

Among all the beautiful pictures I saw in Switzerland, Rosenlaui will remain in my memory among the first and foremost. I may never see it again with my outward eyes, but I have the picture in my heart, and there I know it will remain a joy to the very last.

A walk of a few minutes along the winding bank of the river brought us to the Rosenlaui Hotel, standing at the back of the pine wood already alluded to, and almost covered with flowers. We expected to find Rosenlaui a village, but found only the hotel, where we rested for an hour (from twelve to one) and got lunch, and then started on the tramp once more—still along the banks of the river, sometimes through fields, oftener through forests, and always in the shadow of the mighty Wellhorn and Wetterhorn that towered high above us.

The cool shade of the woods was grateful beyond

measure, and the soft tinkling of the cow-bells far up the dark avenues was exceedingly pleasant. I do not know how the custom originated of hanging a bell around the neck of every animal; all I know is, that the custom has become universal. Every cow, and every calf, and every goat has its bell, and it is said that if a cow loses her bell she will pine herself nearly to death unless another is found for her. As a means of finding the cattle when they are hidden away in the dark recesses of the pine forests, they must prove very useful, for you can often hear the soft jingle of the bells when neither cow nor goat is visible to the eye.

Now the soft echo of the Alpine horn falls on our ears again, and we pause for a few minutes to listen; the music, meanwhile, starting a train of reflections in my mind that have often haunted me since. It may be I thought that there are echoes we do not hear. Perhaps every word we speak and every deed we do shall echo on when we are dead and dust.

This thought I might have pursued much further had not one of our little party suggested that we might learn a lesson from these men with the horn.

"What lesson?" I asked.

"Why, to wake up all the music we can as we go through the world," was the answer.

"Well said," was the reply. Alas! how many people

go through the world waking up discord, and anger, and strife. How much nobler to wake up harmony, and music, and kindly feelings as we march along the highways of life or toil up its rugged steeps; so that we may be the means of cheering and encouraging earth's pilgrims, who are sometimes toiling beneath burdens that are almost greater than they can bear.

Suddenly our guide startles us by firing off a pistol, that we may hear the thunder of its echo rattling against the rocky cliffs of the Wetterhorn like the roll of musketry. Now another sound greets our ears—the falling of an avalanche; for the reverberations caused by the pistol shot have loosened the snow, and it falls over the awful height with a roar that can be compared to no other sound on earth. The avalanche was only a small one, however; and as we are nearing all the while the mighty Wetterhorn, from whose snow-cones the avalanches fall continually during the heat of the day, we fix our attention in that direction, that we may miss nothing that is worth seeing.

Between us and the foot of this great mountain is a deep gorge, from which it rises a bare and perpendicular cliff of rock for nine thousand feet; then for another thousand feet or more it slants upward in a steep cone of snow. I tried to realise this enormous

height—twelve thousand feet in all above the level of the sea, and ten thousand feet above the gorge from which it springs. To look up the spires of Cologne Cathedral had almost turned me giddy, but I should need eighteen or twenty such spires one on the top of the other to reach the top of this mountain.

Here, however, my attempt at comparisons was interrupted by my wife calling my attention to a steep bank of snow that seemed almost ready to plunge headlong over the mountain into the deep gorge at our feet. Scarcely had she done speaking, when the whole bank of snow—perhaps a hundred feet thick and a couple of acres in extent—slipped suddenly to the brink of the precipice, and plunged over like a huge white cataract, with a roar that was positively appalling. For a few moments I was absolutely terrified. I use the word advisedly. I felt my flesh creeping all over me, and wished I could shut my ears to the awful roar, that seemed as if it would never cease. Had all the thunders that had ever roared since the Creation been rolled into one, the noise, I think, could scarcely be more appalling. While from the gorge of the Scheideck rose a great cloud of white dust or powdered snow for at least a quarter of an hour after the avalanche had fallen. According to the testimony of several guides, it was the largest that had fallen for years; and

we were considered fortunate in being sufficiently near to witness it in perfection.

J—— and L—— were a little behind; so when they came up I asked them what they thought of it.

"I think it was simply awful," said J——.

"Well then," said I, trying to look serious, "you prosperous people should take warning."

"Why, what connection is there between prosperity and an avalanche?"

"This! The snow lies securely enough on those slopes in the winter, but the sunshine of summer is too much for it, and causes it to loose its hold and fall. So in the winter of adversity many a man has remained loyal to the truth and to the Master, but the sunshine of prosperity——"

But here J—— interposed. "Don't, don't!" he said, with a laugh. "I can forgive you for being true to your calling, but do wait until Sunday."

So I waited.

It was four o'clock when we reached the top of the Great Scheideck, and then suddenly opened at our feet the valley of Grindelwald.

Beautiful Grindelwald! Among the lovely Swiss pictures that will remain in my memory Grindelwald will ever occupy a foremost place. From the top of the Scheideck it was as though we stood on the rim of

a huge green bowl, with the wooden châlets scattered all over its fertile slopes, and the little white church nestled at the bottom three thousand feet below us. The rim, however, was by no means even. In front of us and on either side towered lofty mountains, little white-robed sentinels guarding the beautiful spot.

A wooden shanty, dignified by the name of hotel, afforded us an hour's rest; for we had now been on the tramp ten hours, not including the hour we spent at Rosenlaui getting lunch, and so were glad to rest awhile and appease our hunger and slake our thirst with such refreshments as the hotel afforded, which consisted of very passable bread and butter, honey, and very bad tea. We were in no disposition to grumble, however; and, on the whole, I don't know when I have so thoroughly enjoyed a meal.

By five o'clock we were ready for the descent, and started off feeling as fresh as though we had only walked a mile.

"We'll be down in half an hour," said J——, and I quite thought we should. But we were mightily deceived. Those enormous mountains dwarf everything else into comparative insignificance, and so we were continually deceived as to distances.

There lay Grindelwald just at our feet, but a stone's-throw away it seemed, and yet it took us fully two

hours to reach the village. The latter part of the distance we hurried, too, for we saw that a storm was gathering. The first clouds we had seen for days began to peep over the mountains, and to draw to one common centre just over the middle of the valley. The higher they got the darker they got. The air grew stagnant, and an ominous and oppressive silence dropped down upon us.

Matters began to look serious; the nearer we got to the village the farther it seemed to be away; while we were totally unprepared for a storm, having sent on all our waterproofs to Interlaken.

The fates, however, were kind to us. Darker and darker grew the sky, but not a single rain-drop fell while we were on the tramp. Once within the shelter of our hotel, we forgot all about the gathering storm in the perusal of letters from home. Still good news, except that the "weather was wretched." Now for our rooms and a good wash. Scarcely was that operation completed when the first flash of lightning lit up the darkling sky, followed immediately by a crash that made us start.

A minute later I was out on the balcony under the shelter of the broad eaves enjoying the display of fireworks. The tints of the sky were something indescribable, and were a painter to put such colours

on his canvas he would be laughed at. Down on the mountain-tops the sky was raven black, but a little higher the colour softened—shall I say?—into something between purple and crimson, and then gradually brightened upward into the most beautiful purple I had ever seen, until the sky seemed to burn with the intensity of this lurid light. Turning toward the snow-clad cone of the Wetterhorn, I noticed that it had caught the reflection, and began to burn and glow as though it were in a furnace, and all the valley became filled with an intense purple light. Amid all this the lightning played in fantastic curves, while the echoing of the thunder among these enormous mountains may be imagined but cannot be described. Indeed, for a quarter of an hour the roar was incessant. But which was thunder or which echo we had no means of deciding.

The storm passed away very swiftly, and as the sky cleared one or two early stars began to make their appearance, showing that the day was dying rapidly; but with the dying day there came that, perhaps most beautiful, sight to be seen in Switzerland—the after-glow. The mountains looked pale at first, with the faintest blush imaginable, as though bathed in the soft light of dawn; but gradually the blush deepened and grew more and more intense, while

the colour changed from pink to nearly scarlet, and then again to crimson, till the mountains burned with an intense red light, and seemed almost as if they would burst into flame. Then suddenly the light began to fade, and in a few moments they were frowning dark and cold on the peaceful landscape below. Twice we were permitted to see this beautiful after-glow, once at Meiringen, and now again at Grindelwald.

After our twelve hours' tramp we quite expected that we should be *hors de combat* on the following day; but nothing of the sort; we awoke fresh as larks, and with scarcely a sensation of stiffness. The fact is, one can walk twenty miles on the high lands of Switzerland with far less sense of fatigue than one can walk five miles under the oppressive skies of England. The air is so pure, so light, so bracing, that one feels as though he had nothing at all to carry, or as though the law of gravitation had lost a great deal of its force. It can only be compared to swimming in salt water after being used all one's life to fresh: you have a sense of buoyancy that is quite exhilarating.

The morning broke gloriously fine, and as we sat at breakfast we could not help admiring through the window the imposing Eiger, rising to a height of more than thirteen thousand feet. Between the

Eiger and the Wetterhorn is the Mettenberg. These three great mountains bound the valley on the south, and between them lie the two glaciers which have helped to make Grindelwald famous. I expected to find quite a town, seeing that the place contains over three thousand inhabitants. But to my surprise there was scarcely the semblance of a village. Grindelwald is the name of the whole valley or amphitheatre, and the little wooden châlets are scattered here and there and everywhere. The ground is cultivated as high up as it is possible for man and beast to get a foothold; beyond the pasture-land there are the pine slopes, and above the pines the snow.

Directly after breakfast E—— and I started off to explore the lower glacier, and, taking a wrong path, we climbed a good two thousand feet higher than was necessary. But the view we got of the valley was very fine. Nothing can be more picturesque than these quaint wooden houses dotting the valley and hillsides in all directions, every house standing alone, surrounded by the greenest of meadow-land. I had nearly written fields: only I saw no "fields" in Switzerland; but I suppose the cotters have some mark by which they know where their own land leaves off and their neighbour's begins.

We got a near view, too, of the Eismeer (sea of ice),

the upper basin of the glacier; and, descending by a rather break-neck path, we reached at length the ice-grotto, an artificial cave or tunnel dug into the glacier. After the natural cave in the Rhone Glacier, I did not much admire this artificial tunnel. Certainly we penetrated to the very centre of the glacier, and had a better opportunity in consequence of noticing the solidity as well as purity of the ice. Still this scarcely compensated for the trial to one's nerves, for we felt that the whole concern was on the move. The outer edges of the glacier were continually crumbling and falling. The roof of the cavern was melting so fast that a waterproof suit was almost essential for the undertaking. The cold was intense enough to strike a chill to one's very bones, while the grinding of the ice, and the roar of the river in the caverns below, together with the feeling that there was a possibility of the whole thing collapsing at any moment, destroyed any little pleasure we might otherwise have experienced.

On returning I was curious enough to take a peep into one or two of the châlets that we passed, and to examine rather closely their exteriors. I never saw any of them that could compare in the matter of ornamentation with the toy châlets we sometimes see on English drawing-room tables, carefully preserved

under glass cases. Still those toys give a good idea as to their shape and proportions; and with their broad eaves and shingle roofs they seem admirably adapted to the climate—cool in summer and warm in winter; while the gallery or balcony running all round the house will serve as a pleasant retreat during the heat of the day, besides being an excellent out-of-door recreation ground for the little children.

Some of the châlets I saw perched so high on the mountain-sides, and on such precipitous slopes, that it was a constant wonder to me how the grown people, much less the little children, dared to venture away from the house. Certainly after nightfall it must be a very perilous undertaking, unless they are tethered to the châlet.

When I read in Mark Twain's "Tramp Abroad" of people falling out of their farms, I thought it was one of his huge jokes; but I know now that it is quite a possible occurrence, and the wonder is it does not oftener happen. Think of little children playing on a grassy slope as steep as the roof of a church, and fifty yards from them a precipice of a thousand feet deep! Think, too, of the loneliness of such a life high on those mountain slopes; shut off from the rest of the world, and completely snowed up during several months of the year. But I suppose they are

used to it, and perhaps find no hardship in such a life.

On our return to the hotel we found the landlord eagerly and even anxiously scanning the white summit of the Wetterhorn through a large telescope that stood in the garden; his object being if possible to discover the whereabouts of a traveller who left about three o'clock in the morning to ascend alone the dizzy peak of that mountain. Nothing, however, was to be seen of him. Several times I went to the telescope and swept the white fields above the upper glacier, but no black speck was to be discovered on that great shroud of snow. But oh, what a white desert that telescope revealed! What a scene of utter loneliness and wintry desolation!

We saw nothing more of the traveller, the landlord's opinion being that he had thought better of the exploit, and had perhaps gone over the Great Scheideck to Meiringen.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### TOWARDS HOME.

It was our intention to tramp from Grindelwald to Lauterbrunnen over the Wengern Alp, and then to hire a carriage to Interlaken; but the weather continuing so hot, we thought better of it,—or worse of it, I don't know which,—and hired a carriage direct from Grindelwald. By this means we missed the *best* view of the Jungfrau, the queen of the Oberland mountains, and only saw her from a distance with her foot surrounded by other mountains. Had we scaled the Wengern Alp, and stood with only the *Trümleten Thal* )a deep gorge) between the Jungfrau and ourselves, our opinion would probably have been different. As it is, the Wetterhorn struck me as being the most imposing mountain in the Oberland. It is not hidden away by other mountains; one can get close up to its base. Then, too, it is so steep. Indeed, it looks absolutely perpendicular from the Scheideck gorge; while its triplet of cones, shrouded deep in glistening

snow, give to it a grandeur unsurpassed by any other mountain in the district. To drive down the valley from Grindelwald up the valley to Lauterbrunnen and back again, and then on to Interlaken, is a pleasant exercise and a delightful drive. We discovered, how-

VALLEY OF LAUTERBRUNNEN.

ever, that "the sights" of Switzerland are not to be seen by keeping in the lowlands and driving along the level roads. One must do a bit of climbing if he would see "the Holy Land of Europe" to perfection.

A few miles down the valley, and at the junction of

the Grindelwald and Lauterbrunnen roads, a curious natural tower of limestone rock rises perpendicularly to a height of some fifteen hundred feet, and is bounded on either side by precipitous slopes of the same kind of rock. About three miles up this limestone valley is the village of Lauterbrunnen (nothing but springs). So narrow is this valley and so steep its sides, that the sun's rays do not find their way into it in summer till seven o'clock, and in winter not until noon.

From the rocky heights that overshadow the village some twenty brooks are precipitated, the best known of which is the Staubbach (dust brook), which descends from a projecting rock in a single fall of nine hundred and eighty feet, the greater part of it being converted into spray before it reaches the ground. In the morning during sunshine it is said to resemble a transparent silvery veil wafted to and fro by the breeze, and presenting all the varied hues of the rainbow.

These small streams that fall from great heights are more picturesque than they are impressive. In the sunshine they are certainly very beautiful. One we noticed in the gorge above the Reichenbach that broke in myriads of globules ere it had fallen a hundred feet, and these globules shone in the morning light like little globes of fire, dancing swiftly downward for a few hundred feet, and then vanishing entirely.

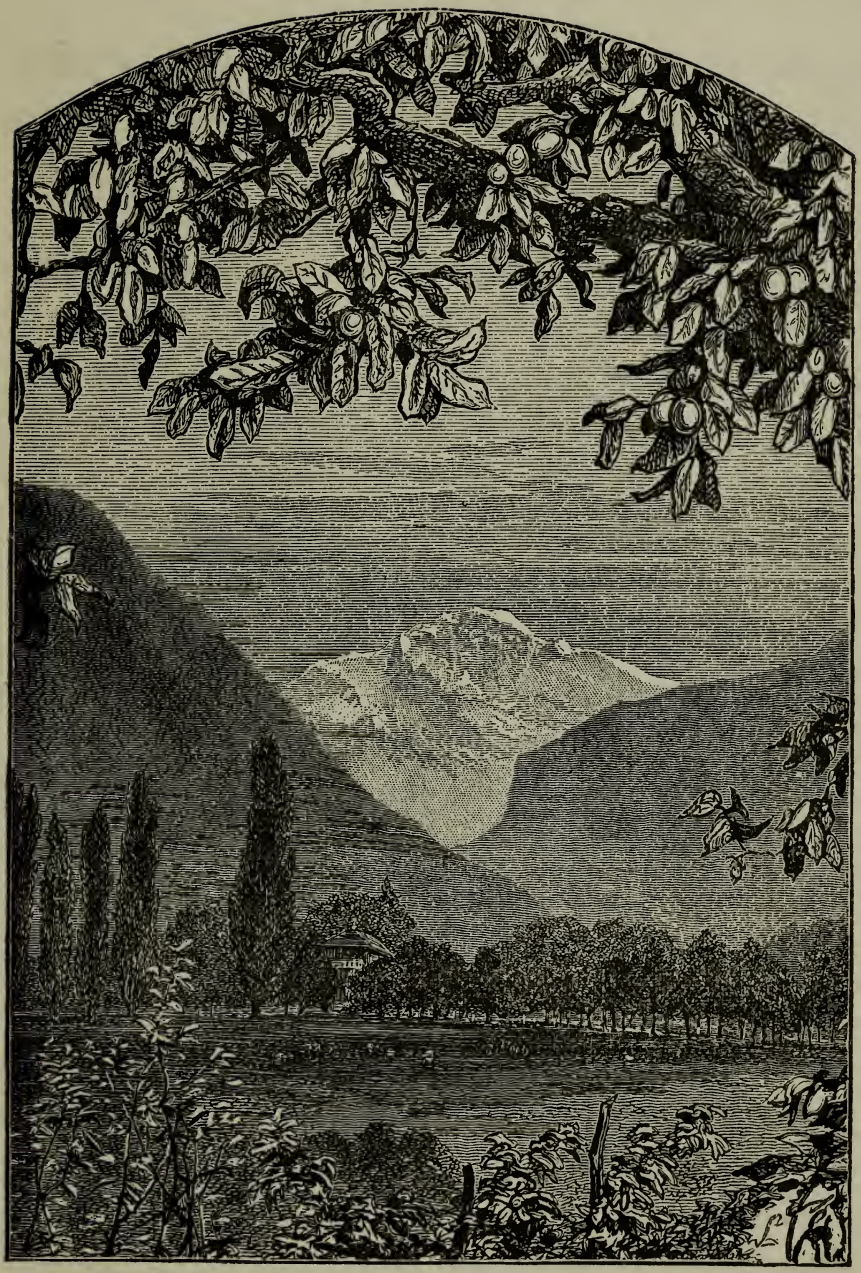
One thing that surprised us during our drive was to discover the pine trees growing in abundance where the sides of the valley seemed absolutely perpendicular.

When I say that the top of one tree would only touch the root of the tree next above it, the steepness may be imagined. There is no fear that these forests will ever be wasted, for no man could get to cut the trees unless he were let down by a rope from the top. If there is earth enough anywhere to cover a pine cone, a tree is certain to spring therefrom; and as a consequence, where otherwise there would only be steep, forbidding cliffs and barren slopes, green pine woods now greet the eye, and counteract in a large measure the white glare of the snow above.

Now and then above the mountain ridges we descried little slopes of grass—a few acres of steep pastureland with a quaint little châlet, that looked no bigger than a toy, and seemed almost to overhang the precipice two thousand feet above us. I could not help wondering, and I wonder still, if these cotters ever came down into the valley, and if so, how they managed it, and how they managed to get back again. Near one of the châlets I saw a dark speck that I took to be a child, and I almost shuddered as I thought what would happen if its foot should slip. To fall out of the back yard would mean almost instant death. What a

strange life, I thought, to lead on these lofty heights. How far removed from strife and from the hurry and struggle of our city ways. Were they nearer heaven, I wondered, in their lives, up there among the clouds; and were their thoughts loftier than ours? Yet surely they must be lonely sometimes. And if wife or child should fall sick, how would they get a doctor? and if one of the family should die, who would dig a grave, and where? But perhaps I am forgetting that these children of the mountains are sure-footed as goats, that they learn to climb as soon as they can walk, that their heads are steady and nerves firm, and that they can walk those dangerous steeps as safely as we can our level roads. Accidents happen sometimes, it is true. But accidents happen everywhere, and perhaps, after all, their simple life is to be envied rather than commiserated.

We reached Interlaken about five o'clock in the afternoon, and drove at once to the Hotel Victoria, an enormously swell place, with a dining-room as big as a large lecture hall, and a hurdy-gurdy in a recess about the size of a Swiss châlet, which ground martial music while we dined. All the waiters wore white gloves, and the crockeryware and cutlery were magnificent. The drawing-room was splendidly upholstered, and the smoke-room most luxurious. The hall was



JUNGFRAU FROM INTERLAKEN.

lighted with electricity, and the garden in front fragrant with a profusion of flowers.

What a change from the simplicity of the mountain regions! Here we were again in the midst of wealth, and beauty, and fashion, and all the tawdry artificialities of so-called civilisation. I did not like Interlaken at all. It stands low to begin with; very little higher than the lakes between which it is situated. Behind it wooded hills rise abruptly, but too near to be picturesque; right and left are the beautiful lakes of Thun and Brienz, but not visible except from an eminence. In front, however, opens up the valley leading to Grindelwald and Lauterbrunnen, with the magestic Jungfrau standing seemingly right across it. This view is certainly very fine in clear weather; the distant mass of snow standing out in grand and beautiful relief. As a centre for excursionists up these valleys or across the lakes to Brienz and Thun, it is well situated. The Kursaal is gay and well laid out; the principal promenade broad, and lined with splendid trees; the shops are good, the prices high, and the hotels like palaces. But for my own part I prefer higher ground. Coming down from Grindelwald we seemed half smothered on this level swamp, and were not sorry to get away from it.

Our sail across the Lake of Thun was delightful.

Few things are pleasanter than skimming over the waters of these placid lakes. The scenery is so varied and so uniformly beautiful that one can almost fancy he is in fairyland, and almost fear lest anything should transpire to break the spell and banish the beautiful vision from his eyes.

From Thun we went to Berne, and of course visited the "lions" of the place, which, by the way, are chiefly bears! Indeed, one is reminded of Bruin at every turn. He must have had more to do with the founding of the place, I think, than Berthold von Zähringen, to whose memory a monument is erected in the Cathedral Platz, with a bear bearing his shield. At the far end of the town there is actually a bear-garden, where Bruin is maintained at the cost of the municipality, and where we saw a big bear squatted on his haunches, and a younger one trying to sleep on the top of a tree, while a third bear, which we did not see, was trying his best to shake down the iron door of his den, and get at liberty: evidently this bear could not bear his confinement. And as we could not bear the noise, we went to see the wonderful clock tower, outside of which wooden bears disport themselves at the strike of every hour, while on every hand grotesquely-ugly fountains with heraldic bears ornament the streets. Indeed, the bears of Bérn (as the natives pronounce it) seem

FREIBURG

to be the chief attraction of the place. The distant view of the Alps seemed very tame after our recent experiences.

From Berne we went to Freiburg, famous for its suspension bridges and its cathedral organ, which contains seven thousand eight hundred pipes, and is said to be one of the finest in Europe. From thence to Lausanne, and as we neared the last-named place, we were rewarded with one of the most striking views we had yet seen.

All the way from Berne the country is very fine, with gently rounded vine-clad hills, and winding wooded valleys. But at length, on emerging from a short tunnel, the whole of the Lake of Geneva, with the distant peaks of the Savoy mountains, burst suddenly and unexpectedly upon us. Such a vision of loveliness once seen can never be forgotten, though to attempt to describe it is out of the question.

Yet the Lake of Geneva is not so beautiful—at least I think not—as the Lake of Lucerne. The curves are not so soft, nor the slopes so well wooded, while beyond the slopes the mountains rise rugged and bare. And yet it *is* beautiful beyond description. From our sitting-room window at the Hotel Gibbon, the scene was almost enchanting, especially in the sunset, when the mountains seemed to take fire, and the white peaks

of the distant Alps grew lurid in the red evening glow.

At the back of the hotel is a splendid old garden, where the trees have spread their branches so thickly as to form a perfect screen from the sun's rays. Here Gibbon wrote parts of his celebrated history; and here we spent the greater part of a sultry Sunday afternoon. We went to the English Church in the morning, which stands midway between Lausanne and Ouchy, and enjoyed the service very much. But the afternoon was too hot to attempt to go anywhere, so we sat or reclined, as suited our wills, in the shadow of the trees, and watched the lines of light and shadow on the heaving bosom of the lake, and the ever-changing tints on the mountain peaks. What a glorious country Switzerland is! The repose of the mountains is so deep; the quiet of the valleys so serene, that if the jaded heart can find rest anywhere, surely it can be found in the deep serene calm that broods over those everlasting hills.

A good many English and Scotch people were staying at the "Gibbon," with some of whom we had some pleasant chats. Some had just arrived from England. Others had come from Chamouny and Zermatt, and were full of the wonders of the Mer de Glace and the magnificent view from the Gorner Grat; while others,

THE CASTLE OF CHILLON. [*To face page 183.*

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like ourselves, had been some weeks from home, and were soon about to turn their backs upon the scenes that had charmed so much.

All along the banks of the Lake lie scattered quaint and beautiful villages, surrounded by vineyards, and sheltered by lofty hills—Ouchy, Lutry, Vevey, Montreux, and Veytaux, near to which is the celebrated Castle of Chillon, in which the dauntless Bonnivard was for a time confined.

It was a great disappointment to us that the time at our disposal would not permit of our going to Chamouny, and so getting a near view of the monarch of European mountains, Mont Blanc. But there was no help for it. It was imperative that we should be in England again by a certain date. So when we left Lausanne we turned our faces toward Geneva, promising ourselves that some future day, if all went well, we would return again and make our first excursion to Chamouny.

We were much pleased with Geneva. If Brussels is a miniature Paris, Geneva is a miniature Brussels. I was pleased to see the Rhone again, rushing out of the south end of the lake with the swiftness of an arrow, and as blue as the sky above it. I had seen the Rhone at its source, swelling out at the foot of the Rhone Glacier a dirty stream; but in its rush through the

GENEVA.

Lake of Geneva it had washed itself clean, but soon, alas! to be fouled again by its union with the Arve.

It was raining a little when we reached Geneva, but the skies soon cleared, and we were enabled to explore the town and make our purchases without any inconvenience. We were delighted, too, with the view we got from the Quai du Montblanc, of the Mont Blanc group, which was visible almost in its entire extent, and presented in the glow of the afternoon a strikingly-majestic appearance. We were thankful for the privilege of seeing the monarch of the Alps, if only from a distance, and turned our backs upon Switzerland much better satisfied than if this last gratification had been denied us.

From Geneva we came on to Paris through the night, and spent the following day and night in the gay capital, and then pushed on to Dieppe, Newhaven, and home. That we were glad to get home again goes without saying; thankful, too, that in our wanderings we had come off without a single scratch.

And now before I finish these notes of a pleasant holiday, let me pause a moment and reflect. What stands out most distinctly in my memory, or has left the deepest impression upon my mind?

Surely I shall never forget my first view of the Alps, that glorious Saturday morning, at Lucerne. How

disappointed I had felt the night before; but how wonderfully I was repaid when that dazzling vision burst upon my view.

Nor shall I ever forget the view from the Rigi. That seems burned into my very brain. Oh that hundred and twenty miles of snow-clad Alps, that three hundred miles of undulating plain, that quaint little town of Arth six thousand feet below us! I have but to close my eyes to see it all again.

That dreary Schöllen defile, and that lonely walk along the St. Gothard Pass above Hospenthal, have a weird kind of fascination for me. Both were so solemn, so awful in their utter loneliness. I think I see the men and women again out on the steep mountain-sides milking their cows, and hear the tinkle of the cow-bells mingling with the roar of the swiftly-flowing Reuss; I see the frowning cliffs of rock cloud-capped and cold. What solitudes! I could not live in the St. Gothard Pass; it is too solemn and wild. And of the Grimsel I may say the same.

But amid the thought of this loneliness and desolation there comes to me a vision of beauty and peace. A green level meadow, with a clear stream of water meandering round it, and dark pine slopes surrounding it on every side, and above the sombre pines the shining heights of snow. A perfect little paradise is

Rosenlaui; a picture of loveliness that will remain in my memory to the last.

Next for beauty comes the Grindelwald valley; so green and fertile, so thickly dotted with châlets, and yet so close to the everlasting snow. High up among the mountains, and yet sheltered on every side. Fair Grindelwald! the memory of thee will ever remain green as thy beautiful slopes.

But I must stop; for the peaceful waters of Brienz, and Thun, and Geneva obtrude themselves, and Meiringen claims a word of praise. Truly I am in love with Switzerland, and I will not attempt to hide the fact. She treated us royally—put on her best attire to give us welcome, cleared her skies of cloud, and gave us visions of loveliness such as heart cannot conceive unless the eye has seen. I for one shall never forget her; she has enriched me with what is better than gold, for she has enriched my life. My memory of her is sweet. Switzerland, all hail!

HUNWICK & Co., Printers, 2, St. James's Place, Duke Street, Aldgate, E.C.